

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

N^o. 231.]

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1863.

[PRICE 2d.]

VERY HARD CASH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

At two o'clock an attendant stole on tiptoe to the strong-room, unlocked the door, and peeped cautiously in. Seeing the dangerous maniac quiet, he entered with a plate of lukewarm beef and potatoes, and told him bluntly to eat. The crushed one said he could not eat. "You must," said the man. "Eat!" said Alfred; "of what do you think I am made? Pray put it down and listen to me. I'll give you a hundred pounds to let me out of this place; two hundred; three."

A coarse laugh greeted this proposal. "You might as well have made it a thousand when you was about it."

"So I will," said Alfred, eagerly, "and thank you on my knees besides. Ah, I see you don't believe I have money. I give you my honour I have ten thousand pounds: it was settled on me by my grandfather, and I came of age last week."

"Oh, that's like enough," said the man carelessly. "Well, you *are* green. Do you think them as sent you here will let you spend your money? No, your money is theirs now."

And he sat down with the plate on his knee and began to cut the meat in small pieces; while his careless words entered Alfred's heart, and gave him such a glimpse of sinister motives and dark acts to come as set him shuddering.

"Come, none o' that," said the man, suspecting this shudder; he thought it was the prologue to some desperate act—for all a chained madman does is read upon this plan; his terror passes for rage, his very sobs for snarls.

"Oh, be honest with me," said Alfred imploringly: "do you think it is to steal my money the wretch has stolen my liberty?"

"What wretch?"

"My father."

"I know nothing about it," said the man sullenly: "in course there's mostly money behind, when young gents like you come to be took care of. But you mustn't go thinking of that, or you'll excite yourself again; come, you eat your vittles like a Christian, and no more about it."

"Leave it, that is a good fellow; and then I'll try and eat a little by-and-by. But my grief is

great—oh Julia! Julia!—what shall I do? And I am not used to eat at this time. Will you, my good fellow?"

"Well I will, now you behave like a gentleman," said the man.

Then Alfred coaxed him to take off the handcuffs. He refused, but ended by doing it; and so left him.

Four more leaden hours rolled by, and then this same attendant (his name was Brown) brought him a cup of tea. It was welcome to his parched throat; he drank it, and ate a mouthful of the meat to please the man, and even asked for some more tea.

At eight four keepers came into his room, undressed him, compelled him to make his toilette, &c., before them, which put him to shame—being a gentleman—almost as much as it would be a woman: they then hobbled him, and fastened his ankles to the bed, and put his hands into muffles, but did not confine his body; because they had lost a lucrative lodger only a month ago, throttled at night in a strait-waistcoat.

Alfred lay in this plight, and compared with anguish unspeakable his joyful anticipations of this night with the strange and cruel reality. "My wedding night! my wedding night!" he cried aloud, and burst into a passion of grief.

By-and-by he consoled himself a little with the hope that he could not long be incarcerated as a madman, being sane; and his good wit told him his only chance was calmness. He would go to sleep and recover composure to bear his wrongs with dignity, and quietly baffle his enemies.

Just as he was dropping off he felt something crawl over his face. Instinctively he made a violent motion to put his hands up. Both hands were confined, he could not move them. He bounded, he flung, he writhed. His little persecutors were quiet a moment, but the next they began again: in vain he rolled and writhed, and shuddered with loathing inexpressible. They crawled, they smelt, they bit.

Many a poor soul these little wretches had distracted with the very sleeplessness the madhouse professed to cure, not create. In conjunction with the opiates, the confinement, and the gloom of Silvertown House, they had driven many a feeble mind across the line that divides the weak and nervous from the unsound.

When he found there was no help, Alfred

clenched his teeth and bore it:—"Bite on, ye little wretches," he said: "bite on, and divert my mind from deeper stings than yours—if you can."

And they did; a little.

Thus passed the night in mental agony, and bodily irritation and disgust. At daybreak the feasters on his flesh retired, and utterly worn out and exhausted he sank into a deep sleep.

At half-past seven the head keeper and three more came in, and made him dress before them. They handcuffed him, and took him down to breakfast in the noisy ward; set him down on a little bench by the wall like a naughty boy, and ordered a dangerous maniac to feed him.

The dangerous maniac obeyed, and went and sat beside Alfred with a basin of thick gruel and a great wooden spoon. He shovelled the gruel down his charge's throat mighty superciliously from the very first; and presently, falling into some favourite and absorbing train of thought, he fixed his eye on vacancy and handed the spoonfuls over his left shoulder with such rapidity and recklessness that it was more like sowing than feeding. Alfred cried out, "Quarter! I can't eat so fast as that, old fellow."

Something in his tone struck the maniac; he looked at Alfred full; Alfred looked at him in return, and smiled kindly but sadly.

"Hallo!" cried the maniac.

"What's up now?" said a keeper fiercely.

"Why this man is sane. As sane as I am."

At this there was a hoarse laugh.

"Sane," persisted the maniac; "for I am a little queer at times, you know."

"And no mistake, Jemmy. Now what makes you think he is sane?"

"Looked me full in the face, and smiled at me."

"Oh, that is your test, is it?"

"Yes it is. You try it on any of those mad beggars there and see if they can stand it."

"Who invented gunpowder?" said one of the insulted persons, looking as sly and malicious as a magpie going to steal.

Jemmy exploded directly: "I did, ye rascal, ye liar, ye rogue, ye Baconian!" and going higher, and higher, and higher in this strain, was very soon handcuffed with Alfred's handcuffs, and seated on Alfred's bench and tied to two rings in the wall. On this his martial ardour went down to zero: "Here is treatment, sir," said he piteously to Alfred. "I see you are a gentleman; now look at this. All spite and jealousy; because I invented that invaluable substance, which has done so much to prolong human life and alleviate human misery."

Alfred was now ordered to feed Jemmy; which he did: so quickly were their parts inverted.

Directly after breakfast Alfred demanded to see the proprietor of the asylum.

Answer: Doesn't live here.

The Doctor then.

Oh, he has not come.

This monstrosity irritated Alfred: "Well, then," said he, "whoever it is that rules this den of thieves, when those two are out of it."

"I rule in Mr. Baker's absence," said the head keeper, "and I'll teach you manners, you young blackguard. Handcuff him."

In five minutes Alfred was handcuffed and flung into a padded room.

"Stay there till you know how to speak to your betters," said the head keeper.

Alfred walked up and down grinding his teeth with rage for five long hours.

Just before dinner Brown came and took him into a parlour, where Mrs. Archbold was seated writing. Brown retired. The lady finished what she was doing, and kept Alfred standing like a schoolboy going to be lectured. At last she said, "I have sent for you to give you a piece of advice: it is to try and make friends with the attendants."

"Me make friends with the scoundrels! I thirst for their lives. Oh, madam, I fear I shall kill somebody here."

"Foolish boy; they are too strong for you. Your worst enemies could wish nothing worse for you than that you should provoke them." In saying these words she was so much more kind and womanly that Alfred conceived hopes, and burst out, "Oh, madam, you are human then: you seem to pity me: pray give me pen and paper, and let me write to my friends to get me out of this terrible place; do not refuse me."

Mrs. Archbold resumed her distant manner without apparent effort: she said nothing, but she placed writing materials before him. She then left the room, and locked him in.

He wrote a few hasty ardent words to Julia, telling her how he had been entrapped, but not a word about his sufferings—he was too generous to give her needless pain—and a line to Edward, imploring him to come at once with a lawyer and an honest physician, and liberate him.

Mrs. Archbold returned soon after, and he asked her if she would lend him sealing-wax: "I dare not trust to an envelope in such a place as this," said he. She lent him sealing-wax.

"But how am I to pest it?" said he.

"Easily: there is a box in the house; I will show you."

He took him and showed him the box: he put his letters into it, and in the ardour of his gratitude kissed her hand: she winced a little and said, "Mind, this is not by my advice; I would never tell my friends I had been in a madhouse; oh, never. I would be calm, make friends with the servants—they are the real masters—and never let a creature know where I had been."

"Oh, you don't know my Julia," said Alfred; "she will never desert me, never think the worse of me because I have been entrapped illegally into a madhouse."

"Illegally, Mr. Hardie! you deceive yourself; Mr. Baker told me the order was signed

by a relation, and the certificates by first-rate lunacy doctors."

"What on earth has that to do with it, madam, when I am as sane as you are?"

"It has everything to do with it. Mr. Baker could be punished for confining a madman in this house without an order and two certificates; but he couldn't for confining a sane person under an order and two certificates."

Alfred could not believe this, but she convinced him that it was so.

Then he began to fear he should be imprisoned for years: he turned pale, and looked at her so piteously, that to soothe him she told him sane people were never kept in asylums now; they only used to be.

"How can they?" said she. "The London asylums are visited four times a year by the commissioners, and the country asylums six times, twice by the commissioners, and four times by the justices. *We* shall be inspected this week or next; and then you can speak to the justices: mind and be calm; say it is a mistake; offer testimony; and ask either to be discharged at once or to have a commission of lunacy sit on you; ten to one your friends will not face public proceedings: but you *must* begin at the foundation, by making the servants friendly—and by—being calm." She then fixed her large grey eye on him and said, "Now, if I let you dine with me and the first-class patients, will you pledge me your honour to 'be calm,' and not attempt to escape?" Alfred hesitated at that. Her eye dissected his character all the time. "I promise," said he at last with a deep sigh. "May I sit by you? There is something so repugnant in the very idea of mad people."

"Try and remember it is their misfortune, not their crime," said Mrs. Archbold, just like a matronly sister admonishing a brother from school.

She then whistled in a whisper for Brown, who was lurking about unseen all the time. He emerged and walked about with Alfred, and, by-and-by, looking down from a corridor, they saw Mrs. Archbold driving the second-class women before her to dinner like a flock of animals. Whenever one stopped to look at anything, or try and gossip, the philanthropic Archbold went at her just like a shepherd's dog at a refractory sheep, caught her by the shoulders, and drove her squeaking headlong.

At dinner Alfred was so fortunate as to sit opposite a gentleman, who nodded and grinned at him all dinner with a horrible leer. He could not, however, enjoy this to the full for a little distraction at his elbow: his right hand neighbour kept forking pieces out of his plate and substituting others from his own; there was even a tendency to gristle in the latter. Alfred remonstrated gently at first; the gentleman forbore a minute, then recommended; Alfred laid a hand very quietly on his wrist and put it back. Mrs. Archbold's quick eye surprised this gesture: "What is the matter there?" said she.

"Oh, nothing serious, madam," replied Alfred: "only this gentleman does me the honour to prefer the contents of my plate to his own."

"Mr. Cooper!" said the Archbold sternly.

Cooper, the head keeper, pounced on the offender, seized him roughly by the collar, dragged him from the table, knocking his chair down, and bundled him out of the room with ignominy and fracas, in spite of a remonstrance from Alfred, "Oh, don't be so rough with the poor man."

Then the novice laid down his knife and fork, and ate no more. "I am grieved at my own ill nature in complaining of such a trifle," said he when all was quiet.

The company stared considerably at this remark; it seemed to them a most morbid perversion of sensibility; for the deranged, thin-skinned beyond conception in their own persons, and alive to the shadow of the shade of a wrong, are stoically indifferent to the woes of others.

Though Alfred was quiet as a lamb all day, the attendants returned him to the padded room at night, because he had been there last night; but they only fastened one ankle to the bed-post: so he encountered his Lilliputians on tolerably fair terms—numbers excepted; they swarmed. Unable to sleep, he rose and groped for his clothes. But they were outside the door, according to rule.

He had no resource but to walk about instead of lying down.

Day broke at last: and he took his breakfast quietly with the first-class patients. It consisted of cool tea in small basins, instead of cups, and table-spoons instead of tea-spoons; and thick slices of stale bread thinly buttered. A few patients had gruel or porridge instead of tea. After breakfast Alfred sat in the first-class patients' room and counted the minutes and the hours till Edward should come. After dinner he counted the hours till tea-time. Nobody came; and he went to bed in such grief and disappointment as some men live to eighty without ever knowing.

But when two o'clock came next day, and no Edward, and no reply, then the distress of his soul deepened. He implored Mrs. Archbold to tell him what was the cause. She shook her head and said gravely, it was but too common; a man's nearest and dearest were very apt to hold aloof from him the moment he was put into an asylum.

Here an old lady put in her word. "Ah, sir, you must not hope to hear from anybody in this place. Why, I have been two years writing and writing, and can't get a line from my own daughter. To be sure she is a fine lady now, but it was her poor neglected mother that pinched and pinched to give her a good education, and that is how she caught a good husband. But it's my belief the post in our hall isn't a real post: but only a box; and I think it is contrived so as the letters fall down a pipe into that Baker's hands, and so then when the postman comes—"

The Archbold bent her bushy brows on this

chatty personage. "Be quiet, Mrs. Dent; you are talking nonsense, and exciting yourself: you know you are not to speak on that topic. Take care."

The poor old woman was shut up like a knife; for the Archbold had a way of addressing her own sex that crushed them. The change was almost comically sudden to the mellow tones in which she addressed Alfred the very next moment, on the very same subject: "Mr. Baker, I believe, sees the letters: and, where our poor patients (with a glance at Dent) write in such a way as to wound and perhaps terrify those who are in reality their best friends, they are not always sent. But I conclude *your* letters have gone. If you feel you can be calm, why not ask Mr. Baker? He is in the house now; for a wonder."

Alfred promised to be calm; and she got him an interview with Mr. Baker.

He was a full-blown pawnbroker of Silverton town, whom the legislature, with that keen knowledge of human nature which marks the British senate, permitted, and still permits, to speculate in Insanity, stipulating however that the upper servant of all in his asylum should be a doctor; but omitting to provide against the instant dismissal of the said doctor should he go and rob his employer of a lodger—by curing a patient.

As you are not the British legislature, I need not tell you that to this pawnbroker insanity mattered nothing, nor sanity: his trade lay in catching, and keeping, and stinting, as many lodgers, sane or insane, as he could hold.

There are certain formulæ in these quiet retreats, which naturally impose upon greenhorns such as Alfred certainly was, and many visiting justices and lunacy commissioners would seem to be. Baker had been a lodging-house keeper for certified people many years, and knew all the formulæ: some call them dodges: but these must surely be vulgar minds.

Baker worked "the see-saw formulæ."

"Letters, young gentleman?" said he: "they are not in my department. They go into the surgery, and are passed by the doctor, except those he examines and orders to be detained."

Alfred demanded the doctor.

"He is gone," was the reply. (Formula.)

Alfred found it as hard to be calm, as some people find it easy to say the words over the wrongs of others.

The next day, but not till the afternoon, he caught the doctor: "My letters! Surely, sir, you have not been so cruel as to intercept them?"

"I intercept no letters," said the doctor, as if scandalised at the very idea. "I see who writes them, and hand them to Mr. Baker, with now and then a remark. If any are detained, the responsibility rests with him."

"He says it rests with you."

"You must have misunderstood him."

"Not at all, sir. One thing is clear; my letters have been stolen either by him or you; and I will know which."

The doctor parried with a formula.

"You are *excited*, Mr. Hardie. Be calm, sir, be calm: or you will be here all the longer."

All Alfred obtained by this interview was a powerful opiate. The head keeper brought it him in bed. He declined to take it. The man whistled, and the room filled with keepers.

"Now," said Cooper, "down with it, or you'll have to be drenched with this cowhorn."

"You had better take it, sir," said Brown; "the doctor has ordered it you."

"The doctor? Well, let me see the doctor about it."

"He is gone."

"He never ordered it me," said Alfred. Then fixing his eyes sternly on Cooper, "You miscreants, you want to poison me. No, I will not take it. Murder! murder!"

Then ensued a struggle, on which I draw a veil: but numbers won the day, with the help of handcuffs and a cowhorn.

Brown went and told Mrs. Archbold, and what Alfred had said.

"Don't be alarmed," said that strong-minded lady: "it is only one of the old fool's composing draughts. It will spoil the poor boy's sleep for one night, that is all. Go to him the first thing in the morning."

About midnight Alfred was seized with a violent headache and fever: towards morning he was light-headed, and Brown found him loud and incoherent: only he returned often to an expression Mr. Brown had never heard before—

"Justifiable parricide. Justifiable parricide. Justifiable parricide."

Most people dislike new phrases. Brown ran to consult Mrs. Archbold about this one. After the delay inseparable from her sex she came in a morning wrapper; and they found Alfred leaning over the bed and bleeding violently at the nose. They were a good deal alarmed, and tried to stop it; but Alfred was quite sensible now, and told them it was doing him good:—

"I can manage to see now," he said: "a little while ago I was blind with the poison."

They unstrapped his ankle and made him comfortable, and Mrs. Archbold sent Brown for a cup of strong coffee and a glass of brandy. He tossed them off, and soon after fell into a deep sleep that lasted till tea-time. This sleep the poor doctor ascribed to the sedative effect of his opiate. It was the natural exhaustion consequent on the morbid excitement caused by his cursed opiate.

"Brown," said Mrs. Archbold, "if Dr. Bailey prescribes again, let me know. He shan't square *this* patient with his certificates, whilst I am here."

This was a shrewd, but uncharitable, speech of hers. Dr. Bailey was not such a villain as that.

He was a less depraved, and more dangerous, animal; he was a fool.

The farrago he had administered would have done an excited maniac no good of course, but no great harm. It was dangerous to a sane man;

and Alfred to the naked eye was a sane man. But then Bailey had no naked eye left: he had been twenty years an M.D. The certificates of Wycherley and Speers were the green spectacles he wore—very green ones—whenever he looked at Alfred Hardie.

Perhaps in time he will forget those certificates, and, on his spectacles dropping off, he will see Alfred is sane. If he does, he will publish him as one of his most remarkable cures.

Meanwhile the whole treatment of this ill-starred young gentleman gravitated towards insanity. The inner mind was exasperated by barefaced injustice, and oppression; above all, by his letters being stopped; for that convinced him both Baker and Bailey, with their see-saw evasions, knew he was sane, and dreaded a visit from honest, understanding men: and the mind's external organ, the brain, which an asylum professes to soothe, was steadily undermined by artificial sleeplessness. A man can't sleep in irons till he is used to them: and when Alfred was relieved of these, his sleep was still driven away by biting insects and barking dogs, two opiates provided in many of these placid Retreats, with a view to the permanence, rather than the comfort, of the lodgers.

On the eighth day Alfred succeeded at last in an object he had steadily pursued for some time: he caught the two see-saw humbugs together.

"Now," said he, "*you* say *he* intercepts my letters; and *he* says it is *you* who do it. Which is the truth?"

They were staggered, and he followed up his advantage: "Look me in the face, gentlemen," said he. "Can you pretend you do not know I am sane? Ah, you turn your heads away. You can only tell this barefaced lie behind my back. Do you believe in God, and in a judgment to come? Then, if you cannot release me, at least don't be such scoundrels as to stop my letters, and so swindle me out of a fair trial, an open, public trial."

The doctor parried with a formula. "Publicity would be the greatest misfortune could befall you. Pray be calm."

Now, an asylum is a place not entirely exempt from prejudices: and one of them is that any sort of appeal to God Almighty is a sign or else forerunner of maniacal excitement.

These philosophers forget that by stopping letters, evading public trials, and, in a word, cutting off all appeals to human justice, they compel the patient to turn his despairing eyes, and lift his despairing voice to Him, whose eye alone can ever really penetrate these dark abodes.

Accordingly the patient who appealed to God above a whisper in Silverton Grove House used to get soothed directly. And the tranquillising influences employed were morphia, croton oil, or a blister.

The keeper came to Alfred in his room. "Doctor has ordered a blister."

"What for? Send for him directly."

"He is gone."

This way of ordering torture, and then coolly going, irritated Alfred beyond endurance. Though he knew he should soon be powerless, he showed fight; made his mark as usual on a couple of his zealous attendants; but, not having room to work in, was soon overpowered, hobbled and handcuffed: then they cut off his hair, and put a large blister on the top of his head.

The obstinate brute declined to go mad. They began to respect him for this tenacity of purpose; a decent bedroom was allotted him; his portmanteau and bag were brought him, and he was let walk every day on the lawn with a keeper, only there were no ladders left about, and the trap-door was locked; i.e. the iron gate.

On one of these occasions he heard the gate-keeper whistle three times consecutively; his attendant followed suit, and hurried Alfred into the house, which soon rang with treble signals.

"What is it?" inquired Alfred.

"The visiting justices are in sight: go into your room, please."

"Yes, I'll go," said Alfred, affecting cheerful compliance, and the man ran off.

The whole house was in a furious bustle. All the hobbles, and chains, and instruments of restraint, were hastily collected and bundled out of sight, and clean sheets were being put on many a filthy bed whose occupant had never slept in sheets since he came there, when two justices arrived and were shown into the drawing-room.

During the few minutes they were detained there by Mrs. Archbold, who was mistress of her whole business, quite a new face was put on everything and everybody; ancient cobwebs fell; soap and water explored unwanted territories: the harshest attendants began practising pleasant looks and kind words on the patients, to get into the way of it, so that it might not come too abrupt and startle the patients visibly under the visitors' eyes: something like actors working up a factitious sentiment at the wing for the public display, or like a racehorse's preliminary canter. Alfred's heart beat with joy inexpressible. He had only to keep calm, and this was his last day at Silverton Grove. The first thing he did was to make a careful toilet.

The stinginess of relations, and the greed of madhouse proprietors, make many a patient look ten times madder than he is, by means of dress. Clothes wear out in an asylum, and are not always taken off, though Agriculture has long and justly claimed them for her own. And when it is no longer possible to refuse the Reverend Mad Tom or Mrs. Crazy Jane some new raiment, then consanguineous munificence does not go to Poole or Elise, but oftener to paternal or maternal wardrobes, and even to the ancestral chest, the old oak one, singing:

"Poor things, they are out of the world: what need for them to be in the fashion!" (Formula.)

This arrangement keeps the bump of self-esteem down, especially in women, and so co-

operates with many other little arrangements to perpetuate the lodger.

Silverton Grove in particular was supplied with the grotesque in dress from an inexhaustible source; whenever money was sent Baker to buy a patient a suit, he went from his lunacy shop to his pawnbroker's, dived headlong into unredeemed pledges, dressed his patient as gentlemen are dressed to reside in cherry-trees; and pocketed five hundred per cent on the double transaction. Now Alfred had already observed that many of the patients looked madder than they were—thanks to short trousers and petticoats, holey gloves, ear-cutting shirt-collars, frilled bosoms, shoes made for, and declined by, the very infantry; coats short in the waist and long in the sleeves, coalscuttle bonnets, and grandmaternal caps. So he made his toilet with care, and put his best hat on to hide his shaven crown. He then kept his door ajar, and waited for a chance of speaking to the justices. One soon came; a portly old gentleman, with a rubicund face and honest eye, walked slowly along the corridor, looking as wise as he could, cringed on by Cooper and Dr. Bailey; the latter had arrived post haste, and Baker had been sent for. Alfred came out, touched his hat respectfully, and begged a private interview with the magistrate. The old gentleman bowed politely, for Alfred's dress, address, and countenance, left no suspicion of insanity possible in an unprejudiced mind.

But the doctor whispered in his ear, "Take care, sir. Dangerous!"

Now this is one of the most effective of the formulæ in a private asylum. How can an inexperienced stranger know for certain that such a statement is a falsehood? and even the just do not love justice—to others—quite so well as they love their own skins. So Squire Tollett very naturally declined a private interview with Alfred; and even drew back a step, and felt uneasy at being so near him. Alfred implored him not to be imposed upon. "An honest man does not whisper," said he. "Do not let him poison your mind against me; on my honour I am as sane as you are, and he knows it. Pray, pray use your own eyes, and ears, sir, and give yourself a chance of discovering the truth in this stronghold of lies."

"Don't excite yourself, Mr. Hardie," put in the doctor, parentally. (Formula.)

"Don't you interrupt me, doctor; I am as calm as you are. Calmer; for, see, you are pale at this moment; that is with fear that your wickedness in detaining a sane man here is going to be exposed. Oh, sir," said he, turning to the justice, "fear no violence from me, not even angry words; my misery is too deep for irritation, or excitement. I am an Oxford man, sir, a prize man, an Ireland scholar. But, unfortunately for me, my mother left me ten thousand pounds, and a heart. I love a lady, whose name I will not pollute by mentioning it in this den of thieves. My father is the well-known banker,

bankrupt, and cheat, of Barkington. He has wasted his own money, and now covets his neighbour's and his son's. He had me entrapped here on my wedding-day, to get hold of my money, and rob me of her I love. I appeal to you, sir, to discharge me; or, if you have not so much confidence in your own judgment as to do that, then I demand a commission of lunacy and a public inquiry."

Dr. Bailey said, "That would be a most undesirable exposure, both to yourself and your friends." (Formula.)

"It is only the guilty who fear the light, sir," was the swift reply.

Mr. Tollett said he thought the patient had a legal right to a commission of lunacy if there was property, and he took note of the application. He then asked Alfred if he had any complaint to make of the food, the beds, or the attendants.

"Sir," said Alfred, "I leave those complaints to the insane ones: with me the gigantic wrong drives out the petty worries. I cannot feel my stings for my deep wound."

"Oh, then, you admit you are not treated ~~unkindly~~ here?"

"I admit nothing of the kind, sir. I merely decline to encumber your memory with petty injuries, when you are good enough to inquire into a monstrous one."

"Now that is very sensible and considerate," said Mr. Tollett. "I will see you, sir, again before we leave."

With this promise Alfred was obliged to be content. He retired respectfully, and the justice said, "He seems as sane as I am." The doctor smiled. The justice observed it, and not aware that this smile was a formula, as much so as a prize-fighter's or a ballet-dancer's, began to doubt a little: he reflected a moment, then asked who had signed the certificates.

"Dr. Wycherley for one."

"Dr. Wycherley? that is a great authority."

"One of the greatest in the country, sir."

"Oh, then one would think he must be more or less deranged."

"Dangerously so at times. But in his lucid intervals you never saw a more quiet, gentlemanly creature." (Formula.)

"How sad!"

"Very. He is my most interesting patient (formula), though terribly violent at times. Would you like to see the medical journal about him?"

"Yes; by-and-by."

The inspection then continued; the inspector admired the clean sheets that covered the beds, all of them dirty, some filthy; and asked the more reasonable patients to speak freely and say if they had any complaint to make. This question being with the usual sagacity of public inspectors put in the presence of Cooper and the doctor, who stuck to Tollett like wax, the mad people all declared they were very kindly treated: the reason they were so unanimous was this; they knew by experience that, if they told

the truth, the justices could not at once remedy their discomforts, whereas the keepers, the very moment the justices left the house, would knock them down, beat them, shake them, strait-jacket them, and starve them : and the doctor, less merciful, would doctor them. So they shook in their shoes, and vowed they were very comfortable in Silverton Grove.

Thus, in later days, certain Commissioners of Lunacy inspecting Accomb House, extracted nothing from Mrs. Turner but that she was happy and comfortable under the benignant sway of Metcalf the mild—there present. It was only by a miracle the public learned the truth ; and miracles are rare.

Meantime, Alfred had a misgiving. The plausible doctor had now Squire Tollett's ear, and Tollett was old, and something about him reminded the Oxonian of a trait his friend Horace had detected in old age :

*Vel quid res omnes timide gelidé que ministrat.
Dilator, spe longus, iners, &c.*

He knew there was another justice in the house, but he knew also he should not be allowed to get speech with him, if by cunning or force it could be prevented. He kept his door ajar. Presently Nurse Hannah came bustling along with an apronful of things, and let herself into a vacant room hard by. This Hannah was a young woman with a pretty and rather babyish face, diversified by a thick biceps muscle in her arm that a blacksmith need not have blushed for. And I suspect it was this masculine charm, and not her feminine features, that had won her the confidence of Baker and Co. and the respect of his female patients ; big or little, excited or not excited, there was not one of them this bicipital baby-face could not pin by the wrists, and twist her helpless into a strong-room, or handcuff her unaided in a moment ; and she did it too, on slight provocation. Nurse Hannah seldom came into Alfred's part of the house ; but, when she did meet him, she generally gave him a kind look in passing ; and he had resolved to speak to her, and try if he could touch her conscience, or move her pity. He saw what she was at, but was too politic to detect her openly and irritate her. He drew back a step, and said softly, "Nurse Hannah ! Are you there?"

"Yes I am here," said she sharply, and came out of the room hastily ; and shut it. "What do you want, sir?"

Alfred clasped his hands together. "If you are a woman, have pity on me."

She was taken by surprise. "What can I do?" said she in some agitation. "I am only a servant."

"At least tell me where I can find the Visiting Justice, before the keepers stop me."

"Hush ! Speak lower," said Hannah. "You have complained to one, haven't you?"

"Yes. But he seems a feeble old fogey. Where is the other ? Oh, pray tell me."

"I mustn't ; I mustn't. In the noisy ward. There, run."

And run he did.

Alfred was lucky enough to get safe into the noisy ward without being intercepted, and then he encountered a sunburnt gentleman, under thirty, in a riding-coat, with a hunting-whip in his hand : it was Mr. Vane, a Tory squire and large landowner in the county.

Now, as Alfred entered at one door, Baker himself came in at the other, and they nearly met at Vane. But Alfred saluted him first, and begged respectfully for an interview.

"Certainly, sir," said Mr. Vane.

"Take care, sir ; he is dangerous," whispered Baker. Instantly Mr. Vane's countenance changed. But this time Alfred overheard the formula, and said quietly : "Don't believe him, sir. I am not dangerous ; I am as sane as any man in England. Pray examine me, and judge for yourself."

"Ah, that is his delusion," said Baker. "Come, Mr. Hardie, I allow you great liberties, but you abuse them. You really must not monopolise his Worship with your fancies. Consider, sir, you are not the only patient he has to examine."

Alfred's heart sank ; he turned a look of silent agony on Mr. Vane.

Mr. Vane, either touched by that look, or irritated by Baker's pragmatical interference, or perhaps both, looked that person coolly in the face, and said sternly : "Hold your tongue, sir, and let the gentleman speak to me."

SOMETHING TO BE DONE IN INDIA.

THERE is a very fine opening in India for a government that wants something to do. Rather more than four years ago, a commission was appointed to inquire into the extent, nature, and causes, of the mortality of British Indian soldiers. The late Lord Herbert was its first chairman, and his successor was Lord Stanley. The commission examined all available statistics of the India House, and required of every Indian station, from its commanding, engineering, and medical officers, answers to a series of printed questions. Every source of information was as far as possible exhausted ; and the rate of mortality, miserable in itself and costly to the nation, is enormous, while its causes are unmistakable and nearly all removable. The evidence cries aloud for the saving of the lives of a hundred and forty officers, and about four regiments of men, who die every year in India over and above the fair average mortality. An army of seventy thousand men in India keeps nearly six thousand beds constantly full of sick, and loses yearly by death four thousand eight hundred and thirty men, or nearly five regiments. Fever is the immediate cause of half the sickness, and of about a fourth part of the deaths. But what causes the fevers ? Next to fever, dysentery is most common, and it is more fatal. But what

causes the dysentery? Diseases of the liver prevail; they are, when acute, so fatal, that the chance of death is greater from one such attack than from thirteen attacks of fever. But why is there so much liver disease? As fatal as liver disease is cholera, each causing about a tenth of all the deaths. But whence the scourge of cholera?

The cost of an English soldier in India is a little more than a hundred pounds a year, so that the five thousand eight hundred and eighty men who are always sick, cost five hundred and eighty-eight thousand a year spent for no return, of which—deducting the inevitable sickness—some four hundred thousand is the cost of keeping men in an avoidable state of inefficiency and suffering. Of two thousand eight hundred and seventy-six officers who died in India during twenty years, and who would not have died according to the rate of mortality in the home army, only one hundred and twenty-two were killed in the field or died of wounds. The common soldier's chance of life is much worse than the officer's, though both are exposed to precisely the same Indian climate. Take an imaginary army of that number of young men, all of the age of nineteen, which at home would dwindle by the usual average of deaths in eleven years to thirty thousand four hundred and fifty-three men. Such an army in India, dwindling according to the rate of death in Indian officers, would sink in the eleven years to twenty-four thousand six hundred and ten, and if the men died as fast as English common soldiers die in India, its number at the end of eleven years would be only nineteen thousand six hundred and seventeen. For, the officers live in detached bungalows under wholesomer conditions than those which have been hitherto provided for the soldiers in their barracks. As for the English civil servants in India, scattered about in homes of their own, and furnished with some little occupation for their minds;—while the mortality in the army of India has for years been sixty-nine in the thousand (the mortality in England of men at the soldier's age being not sixty-nine, but *nine* in a thousand), that in the Indian civil service has not exceeded twenty or thirty in the thousand. For ninety years only one governor-general (Lord Cornwallis) died at his post; and although the last two died in harness, yet the fourteen who have held office—for an average of six years each—since seventeen 'seventy-two, filled their expected number of years by the English life-table. We are not, therefore, to say, "Oh, the climate!" and look listlessly on at the swift work of the gravediggers' spades about the Indian barracks. In India, as elsewhere, men sicken and perish more or less, in proportion to the wholesomeness of the conditions in which they are placed. And the simple fact expressed beyond all question by the two bulky blue-books which contain the evidence collected by the commission on the sanitary state of the Indian army, books closely printed upon twelve pounds' weight of paper, is that the very rudiments of sanitary knowledge have not yet been applied to the construction of our Indian army stations.

The whole body of stational reports was submitted to Miss Nightingale for any comment that might be suggested by her experience. Her comment, which forms part of the blue-book, and has also been published separately, is, that the diseases, and their causes, in the Indian stations, are just those of ill-managed camps, and that even the sites of stations have been often chosen with as little regard to health, as has been shown usually in the pitching of camps. With her own rare earnest energy in speaking home upon such matters, she extracts the bitter truth from all the verbiage of the reporters,—that with bad water supply, bad drainage, filthy surrounding bazaars, want of ventilation, overcrowding in barrack and sick-wards, ill-planned hospitals, a daily government supply of raw spirits, unintelligent supply of food, and a nearly total want of occupation, it is rather a wonder that so many soldiers live.

As to water-supply, the usual pipes are the native men called bheesties, who draw it where they like, and bring it on their backs in skins. Sometimes the surface-drainage is gathered in tanks; and when one has learnt how the un-drained earth is polluted, it seems hardly necessary to look further for causes of dysentery and cholera. Hyderabad says that no doubt its water "swarms with animal life." Chunar's water is "clear and sweet if allowed to settle before it is drunk." Agra's is "laxative," and "apt to disagree at first." Hazareebagh's tank-water, on standing, "copiously deposits," and contains "organic matter in considerable quantity;" but "persons particular about the quality of their drinking water," can obtain their supply from "several good wells." Asserghur thinks that its water "smells good." The same tank is used for drinking and bathing; but for drinking, the natives slightly "clear away the surface." A well in the native infantry lines at Secunderabad, contained a hundred and nineteen grains of solid matter to the gallon. At Bangalore, the Ulsoor tank, used for drinking, is the outlet for the whole drainage of a filthy bazaar, with a hundred and twenty-five thousand inhabitants. The commander-in-chief says, "The disgustingly filthy nature of the source from which the water used at Bangalore is taken, has been brought to notice scores of times by me within the last four and a half years; but, as usual, nothing has been done." Even the wells are impure from sewage. They are open, and "when they get dirty they are cleaned."

Arrangements for washing and bathing are no better. Indian barracks and hospitals are so expensive that every man costs thirteen pounds for his proportion of the house-rent: a rate paid by not many private families for all the domestic comforts of high-rented London; and yet in these costly barracks and hospitals the elementary notion of a basin, or a bath, or a drain-pipe to carry off used water, has hardly yet been entertained. Only two stations in all India—Madras and Wellington—have anything like lavatories or baths, with proper laying on of water and proper draining off, either in bar-

rack or hospital. Refuse water is usually conveyed into an adjacent cesspit, where, with all other foul matter, it is expected to sink into the earth. What will not disappear by soakage men dip for and carry away in pails, skins, or carts, and even women carry off in jars upon their heads, to throw into some open ditch.

Drainage has not yet been introduced into India. Feeble attempts made in Bombay and Madras have simply been devices for the concentration of a nuisance. At present, in fact, even the cesspit is regarded as a luxury. "The reports," says Miss Nightingale, "speak of cesspits as if they were dressing-rooms." Thus at Nuncerabad and Kolapore we are told that "to each married man's quarter there is a bathing-room with cesspit." The soil at Agra will not imbibe the "fluid refuse" fast enough, for which reason "raised paths are necessary between the barracks." The earth is required to receive into itself the whole filth of the barracks and bazaars, and out of the ground thus polluted the well water is taken.

In the bazaar at Nynee Tal, where men are sent for their health, the stench is at times overpowering. These bazaars grow up around every Indian military station. They consist of huts and houses in a huddled camp, and have a population always large in proportion to that of the European troops at the station. At Bangalore, there is accommodation for about seventeen hundred European and twenty-six hundred native troops. But the native population within the cantonment is a hundred and twenty-four thousand, of whom three-fourths live in the bazaar close to the European infantry barrack, and cover the ground with filth. Of the bazaars at Cawnpore, Sir Proby Cautley says: "To give the commissioners an idea of the state of these bazaars, I may mention that the natives build their huts entirely of mud dug out of holes as near as possible to the place where they build. In the Cawnpore bazaar I came upon ponds full of black mud and all sorts of filth, and the whole place was utterly unventilated, which was a very remarkable illustration of how ill-health was produced, not only in the immediate neighbourhood, but all round the place."

This practice of pond-making, as a receptacle for refuse matter, is common, he says, to every town bazaar in India. They dig the mud for the huts close by, and do not fill in the hole again. Such holes serve to receive all the filth of the town, where it remains exposed to the sun. As a bazaar becomes more populated it becomes less ventilated, and in time a mortal sore. The annual deaths at Cawnpore, chiefly from fever, dysentery, diarrhoea, and cholera, have been as high as ninety-one in a thousand,—one man in eleven, or a very near approach to literal decimation. The natives, says Dr. G. C. Wallich, have in point of fact "no idea of taking sanitary precautions. A man has no idea of impurity as long as the water he defiles happens to be Ganges water." During our cholera epidemic of nine years ago, Southwark and Lambeth were supplied by two water com-

panies: one giving comparatively pure water, the other an impure water, containing sewage matter from the Thames. In the same district, among the population supplied with the better water, the deaths by cholera were at the rate of thirty-seven in ten thousand; among those supplied with the bad water they were one hundred and thirty in ten thousand, and Dr. R. D. Thomson justly said in his report upon the subject, "Therefore I conclude that there were destroyed by the Southwark and Vauxhall Company (whose water at the time was impure) two thousand five hundred persons." What can we expect but cholera among our troops in India?

There are few terrors in the Indian climate for men who can live wholesomely. The least we can desire, is, that the mortality among the English soldiers in India shall be reduced to the same level as that among English civilians in India—that is to say, by more than one-half. The first requirements at present wholly, or almost wholly neglected, are efficient drainage and water-supply at all the stations, with washing-basins, baths, and wholesome drinking-fountains. The bazaars also, at least where they surround the cantonments, must be brought under sufficient sanitary discipline. Then again in so simple a matter as the construction of barracks, all the expenditure has been of money, for there has been none of wit.

In the first place, the site is chosen without judgment. Sir Ranald Martin, who has written a valuable work on the Influence of Tropical Climates, says that in India stations have been selected without care; that "no station he has ever visited was exempt from malarious influences; that the soils are damp, the situations low and ill drained, the surface irregular, the ground jungly, and some of the stations subject to flooding." Some were in fact so deadly that they have, after much suffering and loss, been given up. More care has been taken of late years, though Sir John Lawrence observes that some are still very badly selected. But it is quite as possible to build on an unhealthy site in England as in India.

The site having been chosen, or not chosen, the form of construction is the next question. The common model is an extravagant enlargement of the hut, with opposite doors protected by verandahs. One or two people sleeping in a small hut, according to the manner of the native troops, can ensure to themselves almost as good air within doors as without. Twenty or thirty people in a hut, however lofty, find ventilation difficult; accidents of draught affect the course of the foul air; it may accumulate at one end or over one group of beds. But in an Indian barrack, eighty, a hundred, two hundred, three hundred, six hundred, sleeping in a single barrack-room, with usually a fair estimate of cubic feet per man, because the rooms may be extravagantly high, but with a floor space to each man of no more than eight or nine feet square. Madras has two narrow rooms, one above the other, in which sleep one thousand and thirty men. One of the rooms, two

thousand one hundred and twenty-five feet long—perhaps the longest room in the world—is occupied by six hundred sleepers; but each man's allowance of sleeping room is only a space six feet long by six feet wide. There is provision in these rooms for the necessary ventilation, though no possible system of currents could in such rooms really secure wholesome air. Generally, too, these Indian dormitories are placed on the ground. Even in England, where malaria has far less power than in India, nobody sleeps on a floor touching the ground, if he can help it. The floor of the Indian dormitory usually consists of brick, or stone, or plaster, laid over the open ground. In one such room, a flagstone being lifted for some purpose, the stench rising from the ground beneath was so great that the surgeon fled.

The feeding of the Indian soldier is not regulated very much more wisely than his lodging. The old notion has been maintained in practice that dram-drinking is a safeguard against perils of the climate. The daily allowance of drink to each man is three quarts of porter; but he may take, instead of one of the quarts, a dram of spirits: or, as at Mhow, he may take only one quart of porter and two drams of spirits. Two drams of spirit are the twentieth part of a gallon. A soldier who takes his government allowance, as far as he may, in spirit, consumes eighteen gallons and a quarter of raw spirit yearly, besides what he may buy in the bazaar. "Drinking," said Sir Charles Napier, "does not give the fever, but it so inflames the liver and brain, that the fever takes too firm a grasp to be got rid of. Why, their ration is two drams a day, and eight of these drams make a quart bottle! So the sober soldier swallows one-fourth of a bottle of raw spirits every day! You and I know them too well to doubt that the other three-fourths go down after the first." In fact, however, though there is much bad spirit bought in the bazaars, the Indian soldier usually draws from the canteen two quarts of porter and a single dram of spirit. It is creditable, under such circumstances, though bad enough in itself, that generally only one man in a hundred is a drunkard: yet in some European regiments the average rises to fifteen in a hundred. In Burmah, when only malt liquor could be had, health always improved.

In the adjustment of the dietary there is, of course, no recognition of the different requirements of the body at different seasons. Every day brings its pound of beef—varied twice a week, if possible, with mutton—its pound of bread, and its pound of vegetable, with its modicum of salt, and of rice, and of tea or coffee, and sugar. There is no encouragement of vegetable diet in hot weather. The men eat their beef as cooked by the natives in aboriginal kitchens, destitute of ovens or boilers, often without a chimney. They buy bits of the filthy bazaar pig, to eat with their breakfast, and they feed their bodies, forced into dreary inactivity, on more meat than would maintain health in a labourer. The waste time which they might

partly spend in the healthful work of cultivating gardens and producing wholesome herbs, and fruit, and vegetables, is at almost every station thrown heavily upon the soldier's hands. They are themselves cultivated into laziness, until they desire to have their kits carried for them by natives. Except morning and evening parade, and his turn on duty, which takes him out of bed about once a fortnight, the English private soldier in India lies about on bed in barracks all day long, or reads a little, if he can; but only a few stations are supplied with any books; and where there is a government library, it is not lighted of evenings. Often the soldier is so well taken care of that he is forbidden to go out in the sun while it is shining, and, unless he disobey orders, he is cooped up with one, two, or three hundred others, to loll on the beds, smoke, read a bit, doze, gossip, or play cards. For one man employed in an Indian barrack, six are idle; yet it is found that when men are actively engaged on field work, however hot the weather, health improves. Mortality falls in time of war, because the men get something to do. Very much depends on the good sense of the commanding officer. One will endeavour to coop up his men in hot weather, from eight in the morning until five in the evening, lest they should get sun-stroke; another will send them out shooting, and find sickness thereby lessened. But as a general rule, "everybody," observes Miss Nightingale, "seems to believe that the way of making diseased livers in geese, for Strasburg pies, is the best way of keeping men's lives sound, and of making efficient healthy soldiers for India."

The majority of the recruits from Ireland and Scotland, condemned to inactivity under a tropical summer, are said to eat many times the bulk of animal food they would use in their own country, when working their hardest in the coldest season. And they drink their raw spirit and porter over and above that. The men, said Sir John Lawrence, eat meat two or three times a day all the year round, they like it, and "if they have any money you generally find that they buy bacon and pork, which is very filthy in India, being badly fed, and they thus add to the quantity of their animal food." He thought that government might try to lead the men into a liking for fruit and vegetables. "You must try," he said, truly enough, "to carry the men with you." As for the soldiers' gardens, his experience was, that the men would expect to be paid for working in them. "I do not think," he said, "that any Englishman likes working in India." But he believed that trades might be introduced;—work upon clothes, shoes, iron-work, and other wants of the regiment, so as to make the regiment more self-supporting. "The men would," he thought, "take more pride in that, and the officers would interest themselves. It would repay you, if you could get the men to do it, and they would be more healthy and more happy, for the men are not happy; they are restless, and they want to be at something else, or to get away. . . . The more superior a man is, the more distaste he has for

his duty." That is to say, the more he is raised above the brutes, the less he likes being reduced to the position of a vegetable, and not even a good sound vegetable, but one withering and struggling for existence. As the men are now lowered in vigour of mind, hope of promotion, were it offered, would not rouse them. "Very few men," says Sir John Lawrence, "ever look forward for half a dozen years; I do not think they feel that they have anything to look forward to, and they are reckless and careless, and doubtless there is a great deal in the system to make them so."

No evidence whatever could be produced in support of the superstition that men who leave barracks in the heat of the day will get sun-stroke: while Colonel Greathed's evidence shows how much health and self-respect come of a reasonable amount of manly freedom. Wherever he was stationed, he allowed men whose good conduct entitled them to a pass, to go out shooting; and his general experience, it may be observed, is of a low mortality. Of his hottest station, this officer says: "In the hottest station, Deesa, where we were for three years, the mortality in the regiment was extremely small, and the general health of the men was excessively good. I mean to say that they were able to take the most active exercise there, without suffering from the heat. We allowed them to go out shooting as much as they liked all over the country, and a man would go and walk fourteen miles on foot from the barrack, and be back at night; their health and spirits were excellent, and there never was a single case of a difference between the soldiers and the natives in the whole of the three years, during which time we gave them unbounded liberty; I mean, of course, to the good men."

Colonel Greathed would like also to see the general introduction of a gymnastic parade in loose dress, as in the French army, with little prizes to stimulate the active men, and compulsion enough to overcome the listlessness of the lazy. Such gymnastics, he thinks, would be the best thing ever introduced into the Indian service. That is not saying much, perhaps.

It may be a necessary evil that there should be grave discouragement of marriage in the army, though the married soldiers are spoken of as the best men, and a certain number of them at a station are considered useful as examples to the rest. Men get leave to marry, and have quarters for wives, in the proportion of six to the hundred. For the rest, it is more than enough to say that in the Bombay and Bengal armies one man in three—in the Madras army one man in four—is tainted by disease consequent on vice. And when the married soldiers are on duty, there is no provision for the fit care of their wives. At Dum-dum, while their fathers and husbands were fighting the battle of their country, seven hundred and seventy soldiers' children, and one hundred and seventy soldiers' wives, were so huddled together, that one hundred and sixty-six of the children and sixty-four of the wives were destroyed by dysentery. The men fought, but the women and the children fell.

The comprehensive thoroughness of the mismanagement of health among our troops in India is really almost too marvellous to be believed, on less than the accumulation of authority which it requires twelve pounds of paper to set forth in print. No wonder that the hospitals are full. Hospitals! We will take only two glimpses of the institutions mocked with such a name. And that we may not be suspected of over-colouring, we will use the exact words of the commissioners' report:

"The ablution and bath accommodation consists occasionally of a 'tin pot' with which 'the sick generally pour the water over themselves,' as at Bombay. Very frequently there is no ablution room, and the patients wash themselves, if at all, in the open verandahs in all weathers. Generally there are no basin-stands: and the sick have often to sit on the ground to wash their faces. The only bathing is done in wooden tubs, to which water is carried by bheesties; and it is usually poured over the patients. There are no warm baths, and indeed no baths at all in the sense in which they are understood in all the hospitals of Europe, and even in the military hospitals at home. The means of cleanliness for sick as sick, are, to sum them up, *nil*."

And here is a hint of the sick-beds to which the thousands of men whose health has been actively destroyed are sent to recover, or, at the rate of nearly five regiments a year, to die:

"Hospital bedsteads are generally of wood, sometimes of iron. Wooden bedsteads are at all times, but especially in warm climates, subject to vermin; and complaint is made of the expense incurred by the men breaking the bedsteads in their efforts to get the vermin out."

Stared in the face by a tale so horrible as this, solemnly vouched for in all its particulars, and in all its terrible details (necessarily too repulsive for quotation here), by many witnesses, we are not without hope that the English people will exert themselves a little to compel the high authorities who *can* right such intolerable wrongs, to wipe this shameful stain out of our civilisation. There is a something to do that **MUST BE DONE**, and that **WILL NOT BE DONE**, if the men of routine be suffered to explain to their own satisfaction things as they are, and make the very magnitude of the wrong a ground for suggesting to the outer public scornful incredulity.

OLD FRIENDS.

We just shake hands at meeting
With many that come nigh;
We nod the head in greeting
To many that go by,—
But welcome through the gateway
Our few old friends and true;
Then hearts leap up, and straightway
Keep open house for you,
Old Friends,
There's open house for you!

The surface will be sparkling,
Let but a sunbeam shine;
Yet in the deep lies darkling
The true life of the wine!

The froth is for the many,
The wine is for the few;
Unseen, untouched of any,
We keep the best for you,
Old Friends,
The very best for you.

The Many cannot know us ;
They only pace the strand,
Where at our worst we show us—
The waters thick with sand !
But out beyond the leaping
Dim surge 'tis clear and blue ;
And there, Old Friends, we are keeping
A sacred calm for you,
Old Friends,
A waiting calm for you.

THE UNCOMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

My voyages (in paper boats) among savages often yield me matter for reflection at home. It is curious to trace the savage in the civilised man, and to detect the hold of some savage customs on conditions of society rather boastful of being high above them.

I wonder, is the Medicine Man of the North American Indians never to be got rid of, out of the North American country ? He comes into my Wigwam on all manner of occasions, and with the absurdest "Medicine." I always find it extremely difficult, and I often find it simply impossible, to keep him out of my Wigwam. For his legal "Medicine" he sticks upon his head the hair of quadrupeds, and plasters the same with fat, and dirty white powder, and talks a gibberish quite unknown to the men and squaws of his tribe. For his religious "Medicine" he puts on puffy white sleeves, little black aprons, large black waist-coats of a peculiar cut, collarless coats with Medicine button-holes, Medicine stockings and gaiters and shoes, and tops the whole with a highly grotesque Medicinal hat. In one respect, to be sure, I am quite free from him. On occasions when the Medicine Men in general, together with a large number of the miscellaneous inhabitants of his village, both male and female, are presented to the principal Chief, his native "Medicine" is a comical mixture of old odds and ends (hired of traders) and new things in antiquated shapes, and pieces of red cloth (of which he is particularly fond), and white and red and blue paint for the face. The irrationality of this particular Medicine culminates in a mock battle-rush, from which many of the squaws are borne out, much dilapidated. I need not observe how unlike this is to a Drawing Room at St. James's Palace.

The African magician I find it very difficult to exclude from my Wigwam too. This creature takes cases of death and mourning under his supervision, and will frequently impoverish a whole family by his preposterous enchantments. He is a great eater and drinker, and always conceals a rejoicing stomach under a grieving exterior. His charms consist of an infinite quan-

tiny of worthless scraps, for which he charges very high. He impresses on the poor bereaved natives, that the more of his followers they pay to exhibit such scraps on their persons for an hour or two (though they never saw the deceased in their lives, and are put in high spirits by his decease), the more honourably and piously they grieve for the dead. The poor people, submitting themselves to this conjuror, an expensive procession is formed, in which bits of stick, feathers of birds, and a quantity of other unmeaning objects besmeared with black paint, are carried in a certain ghastly order of which no one understands the meaning, if it ever had any, to the brink of the grave, and are then brought back again.

In the Tonga Islands, everything is supposed to have a soul, so that when a hatchet is irreparably broken, they say, "His immortal part has departed ; he is gone to the happy hunting-plains." This belief leads to the logical sequence that when a man is buried, some of his eating and drinking vessels, and some of his warlike implements, must be broken and buried with him. Superstitious and wrong, but surely a more respectable superstition than the hire of antic scraps for a show that has no meaning based on any sincere belief.

Let me halt on my Uncommercial road, to throw a passing glance on some funeral solemnities that I have seen where North American Indians, African Magicians, and Tonga Islanders, are supposed not to be.

Once, I dwelt in an Italian city, where there dwelt with me for a while, an Englishman of an amiable nature, great enthusiasm, and no discretion. This friend discovered a desolate stranger, mourning over the unexpected death of one very dear to him, in a solitary cottage among the vineyards of an outlying village. The circumstances of the bereavement were unusually distressing ; and the survivor, new to the peasants and the country, sorely needed help, being alone with the remains. With some difficulty, but with the strong influence of a purpose at once gentle, disinterested, and determined, my friend—Mr. Kindheart—obtained access to the mourner, and undertook to arrange the burial.

There was a small Protestant cemetery near the city walls, and as Mr. Kindheart came back to me, he turned into it and chose the spot. He was always highly flushed when rendering a service unaided, and I knew that to make him happy I must keep aloof from his ministration. But when at dinner he warmed with the good action of the day, and conceived the brilliant idea of comforting the mourner with "an English funeral," I ventured to intimate that I thought that institution, which was not absolutely sublime at home, might prove a failure in Italian hands. However, Mr. Kindheart was so enraptured with his conception, that he presently wrote down into the town requesting the attendance with tomorrow's earliest light of a certain little upholsterer. This upholsterer was famous for speaking the unintelligible local dialect (his own) in

a far more unintelligible manner than any other man alive.

When from my bath next morning I overheard Mr. Kindheart and the upholsterer in conference on the top of an echoing staircase; and when I overheard Mr. Kindheart rendering English Undertaking phrases into very choice Italian, and the upholsterer replying in the unknown Tongues; and when I furthermore remembered that the local funerals had no resemblance to English funerals; I became in my secret bosom apprehensive. But Mr. Kindheart informed me at breakfast that measures had been taken to ensure a signal success.

As the funeral was to take place at sunset, and as I knew to which of the city gates it must tend, I went out at that gate as the sun descended, and walked along the dusty, dusty road. I had not walked far, when I encountered this procession :

1. Mr. Kindheart, much abashed, on an immense grey horse.

2. A bright yellow coach and pair, driven by a coachman in bright red velvet knee-breeches and waistcoat. (This was the established local idea of State.) Both coach doors kept open by the coffin, which was on its side within, and sticking out at each.

3. Behind the coach, the mourner, for whom the coach was intended, in the dust.

4. Concealed behind a roadside well for the irrigation of a garden, the unintelligible Upholsterer, admiring.

It matters little now. Coaches of all colours are alike to poor Kindheart, and he rests far North of the little cemetery with the cypress-trees, by the city walls where the Mediterranean is so beautiful.

My first funeral, a fair representative funeral after its kind, was that of the husband of a married servant, once my nurse. She married for money. Sally Flanders, after a year or two of matrimony, became the relict of Flanders, a small master-builder; and either she or Flanders had done me the honour to express a desire that I should "follow." I may have been seven or eight years old;—young enough, certainly, to feel rather alarmed by the expression, as not knowing where the invitation was held to terminate, and how far I was expected to follow the deceased Flanders. Consent being given by the heads of houses, I was jobbed up into what was pronounced at home decent mourning (comprehending somebody else's shirt, unless my memory deceives me), and was admonished that if, when the funeral was in action, I put my hands in my pockets, or took my eyes out of my pocket-handkerchief, I was personally lost, and my family disgraced. On the eventful day, having tried to get myself into a disastrous frame of mind, and having formed a very poor opinion of myself because I couldn't cry, I repaired to Sally's. Sally was an excellent creature, and had been a good wife to old Flanders, but the moment I saw her I knew that she was not in her own real natural state. She formed a sort of Coat of Arms, grouped with a small-

ing-bottle, a handkerchief, an orange, a bottle of vinegar, Flanders's sister, her own sister, Flanders's brother's wife, and two neighbouring gossips—all in mourning, and all ready to hold her whenever she fainted. At sight of poor little me she became much agitated (agitating me much more), and having exclaimed, "O here's dear Master Uncommercial!" became hysterical, and swooned as if I had been the death of her. An affecting scene followed, during which I was handed about and poked at her by various people, as if I were the bottle of salts. Reviving a little, she embraced me, said, "You knew him well, dear Master Uncommercial, and he knew you!" and fainted again: which, as the rest of the Coat of Arms soothingly said, "done her credit." Now, I knew that she needn't have fainted unless she liked, and that she wouldn't have fainted unless it had been expected of her, quite as well as I know it at this day. It made me feel uncomfortable, and hypocritical besides. I was not sure but that it might be manners in me to faint next, and I resolved to keep my eye on Flanders's uncle, and if I saw any signs of his going in that direction, to go too, politely. But Flanders's uncle (who was a weak little old retail grocer) had only one idea, which was that we all wanted tea; and he handed us cups of tea all round, incessantly, whether we refused or not. There was a young nephew of Flanders's present, to whom Flanders, it was rumoured, had left nineteen guineas. He drank all the tea that was offered him, this nephew—amounting, I should say, to several quarts—and ate as much plum-cake as he could possibly come by; but he felt it to be decent mourning that he should now and then stop in the midst of a lump of cake, and appear to forget that his mouth was full, in the contemplation of his uncle's memory. I felt all this to be the fault of the undertaker, who was handing us gloves on a tea-tray as if they were muffins, and tying us into cloaks (mine had to be pinned up all round, it was so long for me), because I knew that he was making game. So, when we got out into the streets, and I constantly disarranged the procession by tumbling on the people before me because my handkerchief blinded my eyes, and tripping up the people behind me because my cloak was so long, I felt that we were all making game. I was truly sorry for Flanders, but I knew that was no reason why we should be trying (the women with their heads in hoods like coal-scuttles with the black side outward) to keep step with a man in a scarf, carrying a thing like a mourning spy-glass, which he was going to open presently and sweep the horizon with. I knew that we should not all have been speaking in one particular key-note struck by the undertaker, if we had not been making game. Even in our faces we were every one of us as like the undertaker as if we had been his own family, and I perceived that this could not have happened unless we had been making game. When we returned to Sally's, it was all of a piece. The continued impossibility of getting on without

plum-cake ; the ceremonious apparition of a pair of decanters containing port and sherry and cork ; Sally's sister at the tea-table, clinking the best crockery and shaking her head mournfully every time she looked down into the tea-pot, as if it were the tomb ; the Coat of Arms again, and Sally as before ; lastly, the words of consolation administered to Sally when it was considered right that she should "come round nicely," which were, that the deceased had had "as com-for-ta-ble a fu-ne-ral as comfortable could be !"

Other funerals have I seen with grown-up eyes, since that day, of which the burden has been the same childish burden. Making game. Real affliction, real grief and solemnity, have been outraged, and the funeral has been "performed." The waste for which the funeral customs of many tribes of savages are conspicuous, has attended these civilised obsequies ; and once, and twice, have I wished in my soul that if the waste must be, they would let the undertaker bury the money, and let me bury the friend.

In France, upon the whole, these ceremonies are more sensibly regulated, because they are upon the whole less expensively regulated. I cannot say that I have ever been much edified by the custom of tying a bib and apron on the front of the house of mourning, or that I would myself particularly care to be driven to my grave in a nodding and bobbing car, like an infirm four-post bedstead, by an iuky fellow creature in a cocked-hat. But it may be that I am constitutionally insensible to the virtues of a cocked-hat. In provincial France, the solemnities are sufficiently hideous, but are few and cheap. The friends and townsmen of the departed, in their own dresses and not masquerading under the auspices of the African Conjuror, surround the hand-bier, and often carry it. It is not considered indispensable to stifle the bearers, or even to elevate the burden on their shoulders ; consequently it is easily taken up, and easily set down, and is carried through the streets without the distressing floundering and shuffling that we see at home. A dirty priest or two, and a dirtier acolyte or two, do not lend any especial grace to the proceedings ; and I regard with personal animosity the bassoon, which is blown at intervals by the big legged priest (it is always a big legged priest who blows the bassoon), when his fellows combine in a lugubrious stalwart drawl. But there is far less of the Conjuror and the Medicine Man in the business than under like circumstances here. The grim coaches that we reserve expressly for such shows, are non-existent ; if the cemetery be far out of the town, the coaches that are hired for other purposes of life are hired for this purpose ; and although the honest vehicles make no pretence of being overcome, I have never noticed that the people in them were the worse for it. In Italy, the hooded Members of Confraternities who attend on funerals, are dismal and ugly to look upon ; but the services they render are at least voluntarily

rendered, and impoverish no one, and cost nothing. Why should high civilisation and low savagery ever come together on the point of making them a wantonly wasteful and contemptible set of forms ?

Once I lost a friend by death, who had been troubled in his time by the Medicine Man and the Conjuror, and upon whose limited resources there were abundant claims. The Conjuror assured me that I must positively "follow," and both he and the Medicine Man entertained no doubt that I must go in a black carriage, and must wear "fittings." I objected to fittings as having nothing to do with my friendship, and I objected to the black carriage as being in more senses than one a job. So, it came into my mind to try what would happen if I quietly walked, in my own way, from my own house to my friend's burial-place, and stood beside his open grave in my own dress and person, reverently listening to the best of Services. It satisfied my mind, I found, quite as well as if I had been disguised in a hired hatband and scarf both trailing to my very heels, and as if I had cost the orphan children, in their greatest need, ten guineas.

Can any one who ever beheld the stupendous absurdities attendant on "A message from the Lords" in the House of Commons, turn upon the Medicine Man of the poor Indians ? Has he any "Medicine" in that dried skin pouch of his, so supremely ludicrous as the two Masters in Chancery holding up their black petticoats and butting their ridiculous wigs at Mr. Speaker ? Yet there are authorities innumerable to tell me—as there are authorities innumerable among the Indians to tell them—that the nonsense is indispensable, and that its abrogation would involve most awful consequences. What would any rational creature who had never heard of judicial and forensic "fittings," think of the Court of Common Pleas on the first day of Term ? Or with what an awakened sense of humour would LIVINGSTONE's account of a similar scene be perused, if the fur and red cloth and goats' hair and horse hair and powdered chalk and black patches on the top of the head, were all at Tala Mungongo instead of Westminster ? That model missionary and good brave man found at least one tribe of blacks with a very strong sense of the ridiculous, insomuch that although an amiable and docile people, they never could see the Missionaries dispose of their legs in the attitude of kneeling, or hear them begin a hymn in chorus, without bursting into roars of irrepressible laughter. It is much to be hoped that no member of this facetious tribe may ever find his way to England and get committed for contempt of Court.

In the Tonga Island already mentioned, there are a set of personages called Mataaboos—or some such name—who are the Masters of all the public ceremonies, and who know the exact place in which every chief must sit down when a solemn public meeting takes place : a meeting which bears a family resemblance to our own Public Dinner, in respect of its being a main

part of the proceedings that every gentleman present is required to drink something nasty. These Mataboos are a privileged order, so important is their avocation, and they make the most of their high functions. A long way out of the Tonga Islands, indeed, rather near the British Islands, was there no calling in of the Mataboos the other day to settle an earth-convulsing question of precedence; and was there no weighty opinion delivered on the part of the Mataboos which, being interpreted to that unlucky tribe of blacks with the sense of the ridiculous, would infallibly set the whole population screaming with laughter?

My sense of justice demands the admission, however, that this is not quite a one-sided question. If we submit ourselves meekly to the Medicine Man and the Conjuror, and are not exalted by it, the savages may retort upon us that we act more unwisely than they, in other matters wherein we fail to imitate them. It is a widely diffused custom among savage tribes, when they meet to discuss any affair of public importance, to sit up all night making a horrible noise, dancing, blowing shells, and (in cases where they are familiar with fire-arms), flying out into open places and letting off guns. It is questionable whether our legislative assemblies might not take a hint from this. A shell is not a melodious wind-instrument, and it is monotonous; but it is as musical as, and not more monotonous than, my Honourable friend's own trumpet, or the trumpet that he blows so hard for the Minister. The uselessness of arguing with any supporter of a Government or of an Opposition, is well known. Try dancing. It is a better exercise, and has the unspeakable recommendation that it couldn't be reported. The honourable and savage member who has a loaded gun, and has grown impatient of debate, plunges out of doors, fires in the air, and returns calm and silent to the Palaver. Let the honourable and civilised member similarly charged with a speech, dart into the cloisters of Westminster Abbey in the silence of night, let his speech off, and come back harmless. It is not at first sight a very rational custom to paint a broad blue stripe across one's nose and both cheeks, and a broad red stripe from the forehead to the chin, to attach a few pounds of wood to one's under lip, to stick fish-bones in one's ears and a brass curtain-ring in one's nose, and to rub one's body all over with rancid oil, as a preliminary to entering on business. But this is a question of taste and ceremony, and so is the Windsor Uniform. The manner of entering on the business itself is another question. A council of six hundred savage gentlemen entirely independent of tailors, sitting on their hams in a ring, smoking, and occasionally grunting, seem to me, according to the experience I have gathered in my voyages and travels, somehow to do what they come together for; whereas that is not at all the general experience of a council of six hundred civilised gentlemen very dependent on tailors and sitting on mechanical contrivances. It is

better that an Assembly should do its utmost to envelop itself in smoke, than that it should direct its endeavours to enveloping the public in smoke; and I would rather it buried half a hundred hatchets than buried one subject demanding attention.

THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE AT MANILLA.

To be present at an earthquake is one of those events in a man's life which he can never forget. Wholly apart from the physical sensations, which are of a very peculiar and distressing kind, resembling in an intense form those experienced in crossing from Dover to Calais in a steamer in rough weather and under certain tidal conditions, there is a shock to the nervous system, which for a time bewilders and paralyses the strongest mind. The recent earthquake at Manilla is one of the most awful and destructive, both as regards life and property, that has occurred in recent times.

Early on Wednesday morning I left the city to go to a merchant's private house, between two and three miles in the interior, hoping that I should be able to return before the air had become so heated as it had been about noon for some days past. I was detained to breakfast, and it was past ten o'clock before I mounted my mule to return to the city. The heat was unusual, and the air so dense that it was almost unfit to breathe, causing a feeling of suffocation which made me gasp for breath on the least exertion; once I thought I had received a sunstroke, for having to dismount to remove a stone which had got fast in the mule's shoe, when I attempted to raise myself upright I fell as if struck by lightning. The flowers and herbage looked shrivelled, and as though all the moisture had evaporated from them, and a bright quivering mist appeared rising from the ground on all sides. Very few people were in the streets, and those seemed scarcely able to crawl along. Subject though we are to shocks of earthquake in Manilla, nobody breathed the word to me, so I presume the idea that an earthquake was imminent, no more occurred to others than to myself. About four o'clock in the afternoon, having no appetite for food, I went down to the sea to bathe; but the water seemed to have lost its refreshing power and a portion of its fluidity; it gave me the sensation of swimming in a sea of oil. After dressing, I walked slowly homeward, and, having to pass near the cathedral, I went in. Being the eve of the Fête Dieu I found it crowded with worshippers. Men and women of every hue of colour were mingled with children whose fairer skins contrasted strongly with that of the elders, especially those whose parents were Europeans. There is at all times a striking devoutness displayed in the churches, but this struck me especially on this evening, no doubt because of the solemnity of the occasion. How many were in the building I cannot say, but

the number was very great, for though the cathedral was exceedingly large, I could not see a space large enough for a single additional person beyond a few feet from the door by which I entered. Some notion may be formed of the number present, from the fact that at this time there were not less than twenty-five priests officiating in different parts of the sacred edifice. The air was so bad, that I did not remain more than two or three minutes, though the service had not long begun. There were several poor creatures round the entrance waiting for alms. I stooped to put a coin in the hand of an old woman. As I was doing this, my watch fell from my pocket into her lap. This circumstance enables me to state, within a very few minutes, the time when the first shock was felt. I looked at my watch as I picked it up, and it then marked five minutes after seven. I was in-doors ten minutes later, and had just drunk a glass of wine, and was in the act of placing the glass on the table, when suddenly, without the slightest warning, the floor and every article in the room began to shake violently. I was unable to stand upright, or to move in any direction, though I instinctively held out my hands and tried to grasp the different articles of furniture which were falling about. There was a brief pause, but I was in such a bewildered state, that I had not thought of trying to escape into the street before a second shock came. This was unlike the other in its movement, being a kind of rocking motion, whereas the first is best described by saying that it resembled the motions observable on the surface of water when it is boiling violently. Another and another shock followed, in which the movement was different from either of the preceding. The house was whirled in a circular direction, backwards and forwards. Great cracks opened in the walls, and the matting which covered the floor was rent in many places. A large looking-glass which was fastened to the wall was thrown down, the window-frames were broken to pieces, and all the panes shaken out, and above the din which this caused I could hear the cracking of timber and the crash of masonry. The house was two stories high. At the last shock of which I have any recollection, I felt the floor sinking beneath my feet, and I fell violently on my face. The wall on one side of the room, however, still remained upright after the others had fallen away, and to this the floor held fast. As I dropped, my fingers slipped into an opening between the boards of which the floor was constructed, and I clung fast. I was very much battered by portions of the ceiling and roof striking me, but I was almost unconscious of this at the time, in consequence of the fear I was in lest the remaining wall should fall and bury me. Looking down into the street, I saw that the floor sloped down till it seemed on its lowest side to rest on the ruins. Without hesitating a moment, I loosed my hold and dropped, rolling over and over among the rubbish. I rose and looked round, but so complete was the ruin and desolation on every side, that

I had the greatest difficulty in distinguishing the direction I wished to take.

However much a man's heart may be hardened to the sufferings of others by the knowledge that his own life is in imminent danger, it was impossible to see the dreadful spectacles that met my eyes on all sides without horror. Limbs projected here and there from among the ruins; sometimes, a leg, or an arm, but in many cases the head and shoulders, were visible, often frightfully mutilated. Life still remained in many of these poor creatures, and their groans were heartrending; but I could give them no help alone, and there were none to assist me; the few persons who were uninjured staggered along over the ruins without pausing, and looked like phantoms through the dust which filled the air. I was so much bruised that I made my way very slowly. At last, finding I was becoming exhausted, I sat down on a heap of rubbish, which, as far as I could make out from the appearance of the fragments, had once been a church; as indeed it had been, and one of ten destroyed by the same catastrophe.

I tried my utmost to shut out the sound of the screams and groans which filled the air all night, by tying my handkerchief tightly over my ears; but I found it impossible to sleep, and as soon as the sun rose I got up, stiff and weary, and made my way towards a group of men and women who were assembled about a heap of ruins, the magnitude of which enabled me to recognise them as the remains of the cathedral.

Of all the sights on that dreadful morning, there was none which equalled this. The service in the cathedral not only began later than in the other churches, but was longer; so that while those who had attended the latter had for the most part left them, the whole congregation was present in the former. The earthquake was so sudden, that probably not a dozen persons escaped out of the building before it came crashing down, burying every one of the two or three thousand persons within it beneath its heavy roof and massive walls. When I reached the ruins, men and women were already working at those parts where appearances indicated the possibility of most speedily reaching bodies. The largest group was collected round a chapel, a small portion of which was upheld by the peculiar way in which a beam had fallen. Women were sobbing, and men were listening anxiously at a small opening where a window had formerly been. Seeing I was a foreigner, the Spaniards and Indians, with the politeness they invariably practise, made way for me, and I approached close to the opening. Faint groans issued from it, and I could hear a voice—that of a girl, I thought, but it turned out to be one of the choristers*—asking piteously for help and deliverance. Then a low but deep bass voice, doubtless that of the priest who was officiating at the time of the calamity, uttered the well-

* He was dug out alive, seven or eight hours afterwards.

known words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours." As these words came forth, those outside burst into a passion of tears, which was soon choked, in order that they might hear if the voice spoke again. There were some deep groans, apparently wrung from the speaker by intense pain, and then the same voice spoke in a calm and even tone, as though addressing a congregation: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God."

Silence followed for some minutes, and then a deep voice came forth which was so low that only I and a few others near the hole could hear it: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit," and with the utterance of those words of faith and prayer the spirit must have left the tortured body, for not a sound was heard after this except the piteous prayers of a child. Being too weak to assist in the efforts that were making to enlarge the opening, I left the spot with a sad heart.

What I saw as I wandered through the ruined city on the following morning was more horrible still. In the principal street, where the largest shops and warehouses stood, scarcely a wall was left standing. The inhabitants of the houses, their cattle in the stables, and the rich merchandise which filled the shops, were all entombed beneath a mass of stones and timber. The street itself was almost blocked up with rubbish; and it was here that portions of the mutilated bodies of victims were most numerous, owing to its being traversed by a great number of people who at the time of the occurrence of the calamity had left their houses to take the usual evening walk, or were returning from the numerous churches. The fronts of some of the houses, instead of crumbling to pieces, had fallen outward in a mass, crushing and burying, or partially burying, those who were passing at the moment. In one place a priest was lying, the lower part of his body flattened beneath a huge beam, his head resting uninjured on his left arm, his right arm stretched out, his hand still holding a parcel of *Las Nove-dades* newspaper, which he had probably fetched just before from the post-office. Further on, a woman and two little children lay beneath a window-frame and some large stones, some of which I moved, in the hope that life might still remain among them. All, however, were dead; one of the little creatures had been struck on the neck, but the other, who was enveloped all but the feet in her mother's dress, had seemingly been suffocated, for I could perceive no sign of external injury, and the expression of the face was that of sleep. It was a pretty little creature, with fair hair and blue eyes, and I sat and held it on my knees for some minutes looking at it, while my thoughts were fixed on a little darling in a distant land whom I fancied she resembled.

Not to harrow the feelings of those who read this with instances of individual mutilation, I

will not mention any more of the cases of this kind which met my view by scores in the course of the morning. The hospital, in which there were many sick persons, met with the same fate as the cathedral, the inmates being all crushed or suffocated. The palace of the archbishop was overthrown. The governor's palace was shaken down piecemeal, his wife and daughter rushing from one part to another seeking to escape, while the governor himself, who (I was told) was outside at the time, vainly endeavoured to make his way in, to rescue them or share their fate. I heard of the most extraordinary instances of escape. The tower of one of the churches fell in a mass across the open space in front of the church. A Spaniard, his wife, and two children, were passing at the moment; the man, who had just turned to take his children in his arms, was crushed, together with his little children, while his wife, who was not a yard distant from him, escaped unhurt, as did also, with the exception of a few bruises, five persons who were standing within the basement of the tower when it fell. A woman had been ordered to fetch some water from a spring, but had neglected to do it, which made her master so angry, that, on her refusing to go, he took her by the arm and put her out of the house. She had only got as far as the open space which surrounded the nearest church, when the earthquake took place, which shook down the house from which she had just been expelled, and killed all who were in it. One Pietro Mastai, the driver of a public vehicle, had just left a wine-shop at the corner of a little street facing the church of *Vera Cruz*, with a friend of his, a muleteer, when the latter saw something glittering at his feet. He picked it up, and it was a small silver coin. Both turned back to spend the money in wine. At the door the muleteer turned round and jestingly told Pietro that he should not share it; and with the rough playfulness of that class, he gave Pietro a push which sent him staggering some distance. Before he had time to recover himself and follow his friend, the earthquake came, the wine-shop crumbled to pieces, and buried all within its walls, leaving him standing at the threshold uninjured.

In spite of the efforts which were immediately begun to recover bodies from the ruins, comparatively few of the many thousands buried beneath them have yet been dug out; to heighten the horrible nature of this labour, immediately after the calamity rain fell in torrents, which, joined to the intense heat, caused putrefaction to proceed with great rapidity. The atmosphere was still further poisoned by the noxious vapours which rose from the numerous cracks in the ground. Many are still open in various places, though the largest of them—from which, I am informed, torrents of hot black sand were thrown out during the earthquake—is closed.

It is not possible yet to form any accurate estimate of the number who have perished, but they probably amount to several thousands. Of the pecuniary loss this frightful calamity has

occasioned, it is easier to form an opinion; this is roughly estimated at between seven and eight millions of pounds sterling.

HERONS.

HERON is a Greek word, which, meaningless to Englishmen, pictures to Greeks the bird which darts its bill like the head of a spear. Herons, while building their nests in trees, like rooks, are as truly wading birds as storks. Most, although not all, of the wading birds, plovers, bitterns, cranes, snipes, rails, and herons, have long beaks, long wings, long legs, and short tails. When "we twa"—my auld acquaintance and me—"paidilt in the burn," the practical difficulties to be overcome were how, by tight rolling up, we might obtain the greatest possible length of leg for wading purposes, and reach the greatest practicable depths, without wetting our feathers. But the wading birds have the rolling up, tucking up, and kilting up, done for them. They are built with long legs: which are fitted for enduring cold water a long time; the lower parts of their long legs being plated with scales. Short tails, however convenient when wading, are not so well adapted for flying as long tails; the long legs make up for the want of long tails, by balancing the bird when flying. Instead of being tucked up under the body as the legs of birds generally are, the legs of herons stretch out behind them. Willughby says of the herons: "They have very long necks; their bills also are long, strong, ending in a sharp point to strike fish, and fetch them from under stones or branks; long legs to wade in rivers and pools of water; very long toes, especially the hind toe, to stand more firmly in rivers; large crooked talons, and the middle serrate on the inside, to hold eels and other slippery fish the faster, or because they sit on trees; lean and carriion bodies because of their great fear and watchfulness." Remembering the place which Falconry held in the esteem of royal and noble personages in the middle ages, and the very peculiar appearance of the heron in the air, the man might with reason be deemed a proverbially bad observer of common things who could not distinguish a hawk from a heronshaw.

Their strong, long, round, pointed bills, it was, I suppose, which obtained for these birds their learned name of Arrowheads (*Ardeidae*). They are arrowheads with a propensity for darting their heads into the eyes of their victims. Herons were reckoned food fit for royal and noble tables. The fifth Earl of Northumberland, it appears from the regulations of his household early in the sixteenth century, made it a standing rule for principal feasts that a "hearonswys" be bought for his lordship's own mess, "so that they be at xiid a pece." They were valued at the same price as bitterns, pheasants, curlews, and peacocks. Affording the nobility both sport for their pastime and a delicacy for their tables, herons were strictly

preserved; a penalty of twenty shillings being inflicted upon any person convicted of destroying their eggs. Their long soft black feathers decked the caps of Knights of the Garter: and the crests of the cocks are still used as ornaments in the East.

Mr. KNOX, the author of *Ornithological Rambles in Sussex*, was once present when a cast of falcons brought down a heron. The falconer and his party concealed themselves in a ditch on the side of a bog in Ireland, over which they had observed the herons flying low, on their return from their feeding-ground. Many flew so near that the falconer was entreated by his companions to fly his hawks, but he obstinately refused, until a heron appeared which his experience told him presented the conditions of success. Up flew the heron high into the blue and the falcons after it, and the falconer and his party ran far to see them fall, always excepting those who floundered in the bog. After a time the heron and the falcons came tumbling down, like a parachute of feathers. The heron is, in fact, not formidable in the air. The notion that the heron can receive the falcon, when he makes his swoop, upon his beak as on a bayonet or spear, is a mistake. The heron is not built for aerial combats, his long neck and long beak giving too much notice of his hostile intentions to be suitable for such warfare. But when he descends to the ground, and makes his instinctive dart at the eye of his enemy, his attack is truly dangerous. The falconer no sooner sees the heron and the falcons struggling on the ground, than he eagerly runs to protect his falcons, and after the fight he examines them anxiously lest they should have sustained fatal injuries. Men, dogs, and rooks, which have lost eyes from the arrow-headed birds of the trees and marshes, are often met with in the neighbourhoods of heronries.

Royal and baronial persons still preserve herons. This bird has fallen so entirely out of general notice, that even ornithologists would find on inquiry more heronries in the British islands than they might suppose, since Mr. Yarrell enumerates nearly fifty of them, and his list is not complete.

The most picturesque heronry in the British islands is situated on the river Findhorn, in Morayshire. The broad and deep river has cut winding paths for itself through soft rocks. The rocks are wooded to the edges of the cliffs with large oak and birch trees. Proceeding down the river beyond the drives of Altyre, every winding of the river exhibits new beauties of rocks, water, and woods, with the sea and the mountains of Sutherland and Caithness in the distance. On the left side there is a row of very old trees overhanging the water and skirting a peculiarly lonely and sequestered meadow, and these trees are encrusted with the large nests of the herons. From the wooded cliffs opposite the nests, the herons can be watched while standing on the brink of the river waiting for prey, or sitting on their nests, or feeding their young. "You incidentally gave me great entertainment," says

Gilbert White to Mr. Pennant, "in your description of the heronry at Cressy Hall, which is a curiosity I could never manage to see. Four-score nests of such a bird on one tree is a rarity which I would ride half as many miles to have a sight of." But the heronry of Cressy Hall, near Spalding, in Lincolnshire, which thus excited the admiration of Pennant and Gilbert White, has long been dispersed; for, a very little molestation suffices to cause the migration of a colony of herons.

Mr. Knox, in his interesting Ornithological Rambles in Sussex, illustrates this fact by the history of the heronry at Parham. Lord Leicester's steward brought them from Coity Castle in Wales to Penshurst in Kent, the seat of Lord de Lisle in the time of James the First. Two hundred years afterwards a colony of them migrated from Penshurst to Michelgrove, a distance of about seventy miles. The house at Michelgrove being pulled down, and one or two of the trees containing their nests felled, the herons began immediately but gradually to migrate from Michelgrove to Parham, a distance of only eight miles. Three seasons elapsed before all the herons had found their way over the downs to the fir woods of Parham.

Heron and rooks agree in building their nests on trees, and out of this identity of instinct issue hereditary wars. When the colony of herons first tried to establish themselves at Parham they selected the trees now called the "rookery" to build their nests in, but they were driven away, after a few days' fighting, by the rooks. Victory has, it appears, on different occasions taken different sides. Mr. Knox, when perched on the top of a Scotch fir at Parham, witnessed a curious chase (it could not be called a combat) between a rook and a heron. Returning from a foraging expedition in the neighbouring brooks, the heron was obliged to fly directly over the rookery, or take a circuitous route to avoid it. He chose the less prudent and bolder alternative, but he had hardly appeared above the tops of the trees of the rookery before an old black warrior attacked him furiously. He followed him even within the precincts of the heronry, buffeting him vigorously, while, far from making any resistance, the heron screamed with terror, and threw himself into odd attitudes of pain and distress. Bewick mentions an instance in which hostilities were carried on between a colony of rooks and a colony of herons for two successive seasons; and after some of the herons and many of the rooks had been killed, the herons remained in possession of the coveted trees. Mr. Edward Jesse says: "One of the finest heronries we now have is, perhaps, the one in Windsor Great Park, taking into account the number of the nests and the noble and great height of the trees on which they are built. I once witnessed at this heronry an interesting fight between a pair of ravens and some of the herons. It was early in the spring, and the former birds evidently wanted to take possession of one of the nests of the latter, who, however, did not appear to wish for so dangerous

a neighbour. The fight was continued in the air for a length of time, but in the end the herons had the advantage and beat off the ravens." It is, perhaps, in the battles of ravens and herons as in those of men, that thrice is he armed who has his quarrel just.

An esteemed correspondent has enabled me to add a new feature to this old history of the immemorial feuds of the rooks and the herons. "Do you know," he asked me, "the little heronry at Windmill Hill? The birds have two distinct settlements—the one near the house (the seat of Mr. Curtis, M.P.), and the other in a corner about a quarter of a mile off. The greater number of nests is in a large Scotch fir, in which there are also a good many rooks' nests. The top of the tree really looks loaded with the nests of the herons and rooks. When we were there last year, the young herons were just big enough to show their long necks out of their nests in all directions." If Gilbert White were willing to ride many miles to see a tree laden with herons' nests, I felt justified in starting off by the train to see a Scotch fir-tree full of the nests of rooks and herons together. On the spot, this extraordinary fact was confirmed by the head gardener and by a gentleman residing in the house. I saw the rooks' and herons' nests, easily distinguishable by their differences in build and size, in the lofty fir-tree. At the foot of it, I picked up a rook's and a heron's feather, and up above the pine and elm-trees, some eighty or ninety feet high, I saw both rooks and herons flying about. Duels do, however, occur in this happy family occasionally, but they have never gone further than a few pecks from the rooks' beaks, and a few cuffs from the herons' wings.

The explanation of this fact is far from being obvious. No doubt herons, like other animals, are the creatures of circumstances. Wild and wary in the extreme where they are molested and persecuted, and hear the murderous gun, they are tame enough where they know from experience that they are safe. On the Lake of Killarney they permit themselves to be approached nearly. When a boat approaches them at certain parts on the Wye, they just rise and perch on an overhanging bough, without flying away, while at other places they are very wild. At Windmill Hill they are carefully protected. But I suspect it is owing to the sagacity of the rooks that the nests of these foes occupy the same trees. The rooks are not protected at Windmill Hill, nor encouraged there, and they would be driven away but for the fear of also scaring away the herons. No rook dare attack a heron in his nest. Have the rooks found out by experience that they are somehow safer the nearer their nests are to the nests of the herons?

Mr. Knox graphically describes his visit to the heronry at Parham. While these patrician birds, so long associated with the old English hall and baronial castle, are gradually disappearing before the utilitarian improvements of the nineteenth century, Western Sussex can still boast of one of the most interesting heron-

ries in the south of England. Parham is a beautifully wild and forest-like park. Everything seems imbued with the spirit of the olden time; from the ancient hall itself, with its huge grate, and walls hung with ancestral armour, to the venerable oak-trees in the foreground, and the dark woods of Scotch and spruce fir which crown the heathery hills in the distance. The herons at Parham assemble in February, and begin repairing their nests. In March they begin laying their eggs, and most of their young are hatched early in April. About the end of May, the young birds may be seen flapping out of their nests, and basking for hours in the sun. And indeed onward until the end of August they may be seen upon the branches, clamorous for food as evening approaches, and fed by their parents with redoubled assiduity during the night. At all hours of the night, during summer, the cottagers residing near Parham hear the shrill cry of the herons flying to and fro overhead between the heronry and the open country. During the winter months, the trees are never entirely deserted, a few of the birds roosting upon them every night. The great alluvial plain, watered by the Arun, lying spread beneath Parham, is covered with wide meadows of long rank grass, where herds of black cattle lazily chew the cud during the summer months; but during the winter months the plain, as far as the eye can reach, becomes one vast sheet of water, frequented during storms by wild-fowl and seabirds, while the dark pine-crowned hills of Parham arise like a beautiful island in the distance.

"Creeping," says Mr. Knox, "through the thick wood of Scotch and spruce firs in which the heronry is situated, my object being to approach so near as is possible to obtain a good view of the birds themselves before they had become conscious of my presence, as I advanced, I could hear the indescribable half-croaking, half-hissing sound uttered by the young birds when in the act of being fed by the old ones. But a treacherous stick snapping beneath my foot, all was changed in an instant; the unfledged inhabitants of the nests became suddenly mute, and every adult member of the colony was at once on the wing. Some ascended into the air to a considerable height, screaming loudly, others flapped heavily round the summits of the trees, as if unwilling to leave the place until they had discovered the cause of the general alarm, while a few of the less timid even resumed their position on the high boughs. I now raised my glass, and had a capital view of one splendid fellow as he stood like a guardian angel over his nest, upright as a falcon, his long graceful neck extended to the utmost, and his keen glance directed all round as if it could pierce even through the gloom of the dark wood. . . . By the aid of my glass, I could perceive that the heron which had attracted my attention was a very old bird, as indicated by the long crest and the pure white plumage of the breast and neck, with which the rows of jet black spots on the sides of the latter contrasted beautifully."

Being anxious to examine the young birds, Mr. Knox climbed a spruce fir, on the top of which there was a nest. He was in danger of losing his footing in the brittle branches, and could not say he experienced a pleasing sensation when the tall and narrow stem, already well loaded with the enormous and wide-spreading fabric at the top, began swaying to and fro from his additional weight. Walking out on one of the boughs immediately underneath the nest, he outflanked it so far as to be able to reach the edge, and, supporting himself with one hand, partially explored its contents with the other. He found three young herons in the nest, two cold and dead, and one warm and living; and the living bird did not appear to avoid the touch of his hand. "An effort," he says, "with both arms now brought my face to a level with the nest, but I had scarcely time to perceive that it contained a healthy and perfectly fledged young bird sitting complacently upon the bodies of his defunct brethren before he darted violently at my eyes, although he had previously evinced no displeasure at the introduction of my hand, and I was only able to protect them by bobbing my head suddenly, and receiving the attack in a less vulnerable quarter. He then scrambled out of the nest to the extremity of an adjoining bough, from whence, being unable to follow him, I endeavoured to shake him off, but for a long time in vain. The obstinacy with which he maintained his hold was extraordinary, and even after losing his equilibrium, and hanging head downwards for a few moments, just as I fancied he was about to drop, he suddenly clutched the branch more firmly than ever, and writhing his elastic neck upwards, he seized a twig with his beak, which he held with all the tenacity of a parrot. I therefore continued to shake the bough, and after persevering in this manner for some minutes, he gradually relaxed his hold, and half fluttering, half tumbling through the horizontal boughs of the tree beneath me, at last reached the ground in safety."

The nest was about four feet in diameter. Sticks of larch and fir composed the outside, and the materials became finer towards the interior, which was lined throughout with very thin birch twigs closely matted together. The young heron captured on this occasion was carried home, one of his wings was partially clipped, and he was kept in a large stable-yard. A tank was supplied with fish for his use during the first three months. But afterwards, he lived on familiar terms with three tame ravens, and became even more omnivorous than his sable friends. His favourite position is in a corner of the yard, cheek by jowl with a large watch-dog, where he passes most of his time apparently lost in absent thought, his head drawn back between his shoulders, and muffled up in a collar of loose feathers. But gradually as his dinner-hour approaches he rouses himself, unfolding his long neck, smoothing his plumage, and stalking about the yard screaming with delight.

The beak of the heron seems to be an instru-

ment excellently adapted for carving fish. A bream or a roach has no sooner been disgorged from the elastic neck of a heron upon the floor of a nest, then the beak acting as a pickaxe and pincers, and the young receiving their portions, the fish is cleaned to the bone in an incredibly short time.

The heron, which hunts the small fish, reptiles, and mammals found in shallow water, risks little in the pursuit of its prey. But a vignette in Yarrell's British Birds represents an instance in which an eel killed a heron. One evening a heron was seen going to a piece of water to feed; the spot being visited next morning, the heron and an eel were both found dead. The heron had sent his beak through the head of the eel, piercing both eyes; the eel had coiled himself so tightly round the neck of the heron as to stop his breath. Macgillivray records a similar occurrence in Dalkeith Park.

Mr. Knox describes from personal observation, how the heron, spider-like in his patience in watching for his prey, and cat-like in his activity in securing it, catches the water-rat when crossing a brook. The little animal, unconscious of danger, with its snout above the surface and its tail extended behind it, swims steadily across to the spot where the motionless bird is waiting for its arrival. Not a muscle of the heron, whose snake-like neck is still coiled up, betrays the slightest consciousness of the approach of the victim. But a breeze ruffles the plumage of the heron, and the water-rat disappears. "Now then the danger is over, and you feel sure that it has eluded the vigilance of the feathered tiger, and reached its hole in safety; but a sudden splash makes you start, and you are convinced of your mistake when you see the little quadruped writhing in the mandibles of the bird as he flies away, to gorge it at his leisure."

The size and elasticity of the gullet (oesophagus) of the heron has long excited the astonishment of physiologists. Eight years ago, a preparation of an oesophagus and stomach of the common heron (*Ardea cinerea*) was exhibited to the Zoological Society, distended with air for the purpose of showing the large size of the gullet. It measured two inches across. The stomach contained the skin, tail, and bones of a large rat: and the gastric juice had removed the flesh from the bones. This bird was a large one, more than three feet long, and measuring six feet from the tip of each wing. Soles and plaice, several inches broad, have been taken from the stomach of a heron.

Dr. Neill of Edinburgh kept a heron alive in his garden near Cannon Mills, having partially clipped his wings. This heron would feed on water-hens, and swim through a pond to reach them. "A large old willow had fallen down into the pond, and at the extremity, which is partly sunk in the sludge and continues to vegetate, water-hens breed. The old cock heron swims out to the nest and takes the young if he can. He has to swim ten or twelve feet, where the water is between two and three feet

deep. His motion through the water is slow, but his carriage stately."

This is not the only departure which the heron makes from his ordinary habits for the sake of food. A Scottish observer describes three or four of them as standing weird-like in a ploughed field, where they were on the lookout for such game as it might yield them. Love makes them social, hunger makes them solitary. During the reproductive period they combine to defend their nests from the rooks; when food becomes scarce, they disperse, every one shifting for himself.

Mr. Macgillivray paints a picture of the solitary heron, as seen in the depth of winter in a desert bay or loch, on the most northern coast of Scotland. Done into English, his account is as follows:—There has been a thaw. The pastures have been drenched by the rains, the brown torrents seam the heathy slopes, and the hill-sides are still patched with snow. The blasts are ruffling the surface of the loch, which scarcely reflects the rocks of rusty gneiss frowning down on it, or the tufts of withered herbage in their crevices, or the stunted birches and alders on their tops. Over the long muddy beach are scattered blocks of stone covered with dusky weeds. Here and there, gulls are flying buoyantly about; dunlins, sea-sandpipers (*tringas*), and turnstones, are on the alert; on a gravel bank, oyster-catchers are seen reposing, their bills buried in their plumage; and there on a low shelf a solitary heron is perched as if turned to stone.

NUMBER SIXTY-EIGHT.

THE 9.30 P.M. train had left me on the platform of the Carlisle station; I was on my way to Glasgow, and had resolved to break the journey by sleeping at the Railway Hotel, because it had a convenient entrance from the platform.

As I was seeing my luggage put on a truck, a middle-aged portly man of gentleman-like manner, and with a fine full voice, came up to where I stood, and commenced an elaborate search among the pile of baggage for a trunk he had lost—a black trunk with white diamonds on it. He expressed himself vexed and distressed at having lost it, and seemed quite unable to determine what course to pursue. I sympathised with him, and went with him to the telegraph-office, where he telegraphed to Dover for the lost luggage.

"What hotel do you go to?" said the stranger, in a deep rich comfortable voice.

I replied, "To the Railway Hotel, as I leave by the 6.15 train in the morning for Glasgow."

"That is my train, and my destination," said the stranger; "so I will go to the same hotel."

He was a stout man, standing above five feet seven, neatly dressed in a dark frock-coat, lemon-coloured Marsala waistcoat, and black neckcloth. He wore the sharp-standing collars of the last fashion but one, and carried an

umbrella, a telescope, and an air-cushion in one hand, while the fingers of the other hand played with a heavy steel watch-chain. He was a man with large well-defined features, bushy eyebrows, and a rather coarse but humorous mouth. When he lifted his hat, I saw that he was rather bald, and had a scar high up on his left temple.

"Beds?" said the lady at the hotel bar, running her finger up and down a large black multiplication-table covered with white figures, with mysterious keys hanging below each of them, like fruit on the stem. While she was pursuing this task with the air of conferring a favour rather than of welcoming guests, the stranger, who had already introduced himself to me as Mr. Thistlewood, whispered in my ear:

"Do the Custom-house officers take bribes?" I saw, of course, that he meant this as a joke, and I laughed.

"Of course not," I said. "They'll pass our luggage directly."

Mr. Thistlewood was evidently a born humorist, for not the slightest return smile dimpled his face as he replied:

"Well, so I thought; they'll search it more completely, I suppose, when we get to Tibet."

Excellent satirist; he meant to ridicule our absurd Custom-house restrictions, and to glance incidentally at the speed of modern travelling, as if Carlisle were only the first station on some great and perilous journey we were about to undertake.

"Sixty-seven and sixty-eight, John," said the lady, handing the keys to the porter, who instantly shouldered my trunk and began to ascend the staircase.

"Would you order dinner, sir?" he said, as he let the portmanteau drop at the door of 67.

"Dinner for two," I answer, glancing at my new friend, "and as soon as possible."

"What'll you have, sir?"

"Soup, a whiting or so, and a roast fowl."

"Exactly," said my friend.

"Sorry, sir," said the porter to Mr. Thistlewood, "that there's no glass in your room, sir; chambermaid broke it yesterday; get you one directly, sir."

"No, no, no, no," said my companion, rather irritably. "I never allow glass in my room. Bring a glass, and I leave the house." As he said this, he smiled at me, as much as to say this is a joke of mine to startle the porter.

"Oh, of course not, if you don't wish, sir," said the porter, shutting me in 67, and leading Mr. Thistlewood into No. 68.

To wash, dress, and put on slippers after a long journey, is a great pleasure.

My room, 67, had a side-door opening into 68, and as my washing-stand stood near it, I could not help hearing my eccentric friend talking to himself as he took off his boots. All that I could distinguish, however, were these remarkable words:

"The discrimination of logic by Jack Sheppard, as the homology of thought, from psychology, as the phenomenology of mind, as Dr. Johnson very truly said to Tippoo Sahib, will not hold. SHALABALA!"

This shalabala was shouted so loud that I thought it right to answer the humorist, or actor, or ventriloquist, or professor, or whatever he might be; I tapped at the door.

"How about Tibet now?" replied a voice; and then there came a curious chuckling laugh, and the question, "Do you understand comic fluxions?"

"Not a bit," I answered; "and, what's more, I never even heard of them."

"No more did Hegel," he replied, "till the Bampton Professor came and proved by arithmetic that Moses was wrong about the height of the Pyramids."

What inexhaustible fancy. There was a tap at my door.

"Dinner's ready, sir."

"All right," I replied. "We'll be down directly."

I was down first, and Thistlewood was not long after me. The soup came in, and my companion superintended the tureen.

"Soup?" said he.

I nodded in the affirmative.

"Do you profess ontology or dentology?" said he, "for as I took off my boots just now it seemed to me that you were one of those persons who would smile at the baseless dialectic of Plato, and deride the irrational logic of Hegel. Waiter, you've forgotten the bread—stale! Pardon me, sir, but I am an enthusiast, as you have perhaps already guessed."

"A great humorist," I said, laughing, "and a man of science, I am sure."

"You're right, sir, you're right," said my friend, rather vociferously. "Cayenne pepper, waiter! I have devoted years in my professor's rooms in St. Bees, to studying the solar spots and the causes of the sun's heat. I have also only yesterday discovered a clue—to what do you think, sir? Tell the cook, waiter, there is too much salt in this soup."

"I really cannot guess. No, thank you, no more soup."

"Perpetual motion, that's all," said my eccentric friend, coolly, as he removed the cover of the fish. "I'll explain it to you in a moment with pieces of bread. This crust is D, that is a rod fixed by one end to a beam supporter, while these bits of crumb, A, B, and C (this big one's C), are three pair of levers, forming a parallelopipedon; this spoon is D; the piston-rod attached to H, the salt-cellar; this knife, E, is the hot-water pump connected with the parallel motion at F; this fork—"

I suppose I looked rather wandering, for my new friend here took mercy on me.

"I see," he said, "you don't follow my definitions. I will explain it better after dinner, with French plums on a clear table—leg or wing?"

My friend was a master-mind; that was quite evident. How could I expect to follow the flights of such a mind?

"Potato?"

"Thank you."

"It was I," he said, "who invented Papin's

digestor, Arnott's stove, and the Argand lamp; but they've robbed me of them all. It was I who discovered the plan of water-tight bulkheads, the paddle-box life-boat, Eley's cartridges, and the percussion-cap; but they rob me, sir, of everything—glory, Three per Cents, Real del Monte, Mexicans, everything. They'd burn me if they could, because I anticipated them with the sewing-machine, the oyster opener, the screw boot-jack, and the apple-pip crusher."

"You're not the first inventor," I said, laughing at the eccentric variety of my friend's studies, "who has been robbed of his due fame. Look at Galileo."

"I knew him," said Thistlewood; "he lived in St. Mary-axe, and sold stationery. He was of a green complexion. Some more fowl, sir?"

The naïveté of this remark made me laugh in spite of myself.

"If you please; a drumstick will do. I presume, from that remark, you entertain some eccentric notions about transmigration?"

"Of course I do. I call all men who die, divers; they return, but I know them again; different names and professions; but, Lord bless you! the same faces and manners.—Oh, I've got my eye on the divers! There's a butcher lives opposite me, fat, square face, little eyes, like a prize-pig, stands straddling at his door, with his hands on his waist. People call that man Jackson, of No. 33, Whitechapel-road. Who do you think he really is?"

"Can't guess."

"Henry the Eighth; simply Henry the Eighth. Nero is a prizefighter, Francis the First is on the Stock Exchange, Socrates keeps a cheese shop on Ludgate-hill, Tamerlane writes for a Sunday paper, Marlborough is now an omnibus conductor. Oh, I've got my eye on them!"

I nearly fell off my chair laughing.

"Robespierre cuts hair, Louis the Eleventh is a dissenting minister, and Bossuet edits Hood's works. Oh, I know them—I know their faces—they can't deceive me."

Here the conversation dropped, for the waiter brought in some sherry we had ordered; when we had helped ourselves, had nodded and sipped our wine, this extraordinary man asked, "Were you ever up in a balloon?"

"I never had that pleasure."

"A pleasure, indeed," said the enthusiast; "but I once had a most remarkable escape. Some villain, jealous of my fame, substituted fulminating mercury for the sand usually used for ballast. Luckily, I was taken ill the night before. The man who went up in my place (by a special Providence), when half a mile high, just over Lambeth, was blown to a cinder; his watch fell in a garden near Norwood, and was given me as a keepsake. Here it is. You observe the dent on the right-hand side? That's where it struck a milkman who was walking up to the back door at the time."

"I don't see the dent," said I, looking closely, "but here is the name of the maker; that's Dent."

Mr. Thistlewood exploded with laughter. "Oh, you sharp fellow," he said, "you see in a moment when I'm drawing the long bow. Pass the wine."

That insatiable tongue began to tire. The day's excitement and the fatigues of the journey began to tell. We both grew silent and sipped contemplatively; first I yawned, then my friend yawned and looked at the candles on the sideboard. Then we lighted up again about the American war, about the wrongs of Poland, about Mexico, about the cruel amusements now in vogue, about sensational books, and other matters. Finally, we went up-stairs together, and shook hands at my bedroom door.

I had blown out the light, and was just tumbling into bed, when my conscience smote me: I had forgotten to wind up my watch. I instantly opened my bedroom door, and re-lit my candle at the little blue jet of gas burning in the corridor; then going back into my room, and shutting the door, I took down my coat and searched my pockets for my keys. I dived, and brought up Bradshaw, a pocket-handkerchief, and a rumpled ball of paper, which, being smoothed out, revealed itself as an ill-treated copy of the Times. As it lay before me on the drawers, just as I was bending down to blow out the candle, my eye fell on an advertisement at the top of the second column; seeing the words "CAUTION TO HOTEL-KEEPERS!" it remained riveted there, until I had devoured every syllable. The terrible advertisement, that seemed suddenly to turn my heart into a large lump of ice, ran thus:

"CAUTION TO HOTEL-KEEPERS!

"AN INSANE GENTLEMAN of middling stature, stout, rather bald, black hair and bushy eyebrows, dressed in black frock-coat and Marsala waistcoat, carrying a few papers, an air-cushion, and an umbrella, is going about seeking accommodation with anybody who will trust him. He has no means, and is dangerous. Information leading to his discovery, given to Mr. Oxford, news-agent, Clerkenwell, shall be rewarded."

Good Heavens! thought I, as the paper dropped from my hands, a dangerous maniac in the room next to me! Shall I alarm the house? No; that, on second consideration, I thought unadvisable, for should I be mistaken in my companion's identity, I should lay myself open to an action for defamation, false imprisonment, or some other horrible thing of that kind. Besides, madmen were only dangerous. I said to myself, under provocation, and on their special topics. He might fancy himself Emperor of China, or a land turtle, a washing-basin, or a cucumber; but there was no great harm in that; no, I would shake off these fears—perhaps, after all, utterly groundless—lock the doors, and sleep soundly until Boots called me for the early train. Once away in the train, I could easily cross-examine my companion in such a way as to elicit his insanity, if it really existed, and could then act accordingly.

I determined, however, before going to bed, to reconnoitre; so I quietly stole barefoot to the

door of communication between the two bedrooms in order to listen. I put my ear to a chink, and could hear a drowsy voice, as of a man almost asleep, droning nonsense-verses and weights and measures. Thus :

"If A is to B
What D is to C,
According to Bohn's deductions,
Then F is to me
What O is to P;
That's my theory of conic fluxions."

Then the voice stopped like clockwork run out. A moment after it continued, more drowsily :

"Ten gold itchebos equal ten gold copangs,
Fifteen mas equal one itchebo,
One oban equal three copangs,
One kodama equal fifteen condorines,
One managoga equal ten thousand ickmagoga,
One tattamy equal—"

Here the voice stopped, and a tremendous sonorous snore followed. The man was mad, that was evident ; but he was harmless, and he was asleep.

I felt in the darkness—for I had blown out the candle—for the key. There was none ; so I contented myself with quietly placing two chairs in such a way as that no one could open the door without moving them and awaking me. I then took out the key of my own bedroom door, placed it under my pillow, and jumped into bed.

For some twenty minutes I sat up listening to the heavy snoring of Mr. Thistlewood. I then lay down, fell asleep, and dreamed.

Presently a low creaking noise awoke me, and I started up in bed.

Yes, it was the maniac ! There were the chairs moving slowly back, and there was the door opening wider and wider. Well, he might be restless and curious and yet mean no harm ; he might be sleep-walking, and yet be amiable and tractable. My bed was far from the door, so I turned my head towards the door, rolled it in the bed-clothes, leaving only one eye clear, and lay as still as a mummy.

The door opened, and Thistlewood entered on tiptoe. He was in his long nightgown, but there was nothing else spectral about him. He had his boots on, his face was red, and his smile was as pleasant as ever.

It was just daybreak, and the cold pure grey light showed him clearly to me as he pulled up the blinds and looked around with great curiosity but perfect composure.

He was talking to himself.

"Kepler," he said, "you invented the pendulum. Bacon, you discovered turtle-soup. Rumford, you invented the patent shaving-box. But you are all fools compared to me, for I discovered the egg-whipping machine, the oyster-opener, the knife-cleaner, and Betts's brandy."

All of a sudden, the reflexion of himself in my pier-glass caught his eye, and the sight of it seemed to drive him to fury. He lifted his right foot and drove it through the glass, which shivered it into a thousand pieces. Then in a

moment he broke the legs off two chairs, and shattered the second glass, the washing-jug, and the glass over the fireplace.

"I know you," he cried. "I know you ! You have been following me about for years ; you dog me everywhere. I see you in the sunshine, in the moonlight, on the walls, on the ceiling, in the silver spoons, in the aquarium, in the shop-windows, everywhere, and everywhere. I will thus beat and smash you, hell-born image of myself!"

As he said this, he pounded the fragments almost to dust, danced on them, and laughed as they splashed round him. Then, seizing a huge hatchet-shaped fragment of plate-glass, he cried, looking towards my bed :

"But where is that wretch who denied last night that I invented perpetual motion ? It was he who filled this room with images to vex and dog me.—Stop ; I'll go and get my razor ; it'll do it cleaner."

The moment he darted into his own room I leaped out of bed, rushed into the corridor, and quietly locked my door on the outside. Then I tried the key in his, and finding it fitted, I locked his door too.

I heard him scream and howl, drag down the bed-curtains, and rush at the door, and kick, and thump, and cut at the wood with his razor, as he cried :

"Forty days I have been in the wilderness. Newton, let me out, and bring me a boiled pelican ; Kepler, some brandy-and-water ; and tell the landlord, Flamstead, there's a man run away here without paying for his bed. Cut his throat, I tell you, for he says I didn't discover perpetual motion!"

I ran to the end of the corridor, where some twenty bells hung. I beat on them all, till every person in the hotel came to my help—landlord, waiters, chambermaids, ostlers, guests, everybody. I told them of my narrow escape, and of the madman, and we then arranged to secure him—by flinging blankets over him when we opened the door and rushed in.

We did secure the man after a tremendous struggle, for his strength was superhuman. We then tied his hands behind him, and sent for the police to put a strait-waistcoat on him and take him into custody.

Next day his keepers arrived, and took charge of him. It appeared that he was a professor of St. Bees, a scientific inventor, who had gone mad partly from over-study, but still more from being rejected by a lady. Ever since that rejection, he had taken it into his head that he was so superhumanly hideous that no one, male or female, could bear to look at him ; and he had in consequence taken a marked hatred to all mirrors and looking-glasses, which he made a rule of destroying wherever he found them.

Now ready, bound in cloth, price 5s. 6d.

THE NINTH VOLUME.

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.